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The development of clothing concepts in  
response to analysis of changing gendered  
social attitudes

Philippa Jackson  
PhD 2020



The development of clothing concepts in  
response to analysis of changing gendered  
social attitudes

Philippa Jackson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements of Manchester  
Metropolitan University for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

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2020

## Abstract.

The relationship of gender and clothing were widely discussed by theorists, and fashion collections illustrated this thinking. This study aimed to address one area of this relationship, by conducting practice-based research to develop garments for women who wear men's clothing. The study responds to real insights from the women themselves through qualitative interviews.

This study aimed to understand why women choose to wear men's clothing and to use this to question gender assignment in clothing, in order to develop design concepts for the development of clothing for this specific group of women.

This interdisciplinary practice-based study combined phenomenological thinking and practice with theory to engage more deeply with why women choose to wear men's clothing. The Victorian square cut shirt became pivotal to the process of design and accorded with preferences for large shapes and interesting proportion. The Pit brow study highlighted how historical gender roles can aid in the understanding of gendered clothing now. Surveys asking about the gendered perception of clothing on and off the body found significantly that clothing is perceived differently when not on a body. Qualitative interviews were conducted with 10 women answering a call for women who wear men's clothing. Experimental design concepts were developed though combining, research inputs and an output culminating in a selection of garments was produced. The practice found that space between the body and clothing provides feelings of well-being, through comfort, space and coverage of the body.

This study contributes to knowledge of garment design practice, by recording and analysing the complex thinking behind garment design for women who wear men's clothing for fashion. Experimental responsive making, can create new and effective design methods through an intra-active relationship with fabric and an openness to the haphazard. The process of research and design combined with theory has defined preferences for the development of clothing for the group of women. The conceptual model, *Women's clothing preferences. Wellbeing in relation to gender and body image*, records the final preferences and is a resource for future use for the design of clothing for all people. Gender assignment in clothing from the perspective of the viewer was found to be variable and influenced by personal and situational aspects, which were

changeable. For the women participants, gendered clothing for the wearer, was found to be selected primarily by merit of wear properties. Women who wear men's clothing do not wish to be defined by their gendered body, but by a sense of who they are.

## Supervisory Team.

Dr Kathryn Brownbridge, Professor Sarah Grogan, Dr Emma Jenkins, Alison Welsh.

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## Chapter 1. Introduction.

### 1.2. Introduction.

This interdisciplinary practice-based study mixes practice and participant-based enquiry informed by phenomenology. It aims to understand the motivations of women who choose to wear male gendered clothing for fashion and to use this to question gender assignment in clothing, through practical experimentation. Fashion's relationship with current social attitudes, particularly referencing gender assignment, was also explored.

In today's culture, attitudes towards masculine and feminine and readings of the body are undergoing change. Fashion design asks questions about constructions of gender and there is an emerging interest in the pursuit of gender-free fashion. Designers such as Art School and Craig Green, do not dictate which gender should wear their designs. This study aimed to address one of these questions in the form of women who wear male gendered clothing for fashion. Crane (2000) noted that women used to borrow from men in the nineteenth century and the point was made that 'the borrowed items did not lose their masculine connotations' Crane (2000:106). Entwistle (2000) claimed that these gender distinctions, '...often become fundamental to our 'common sense' readings of the body" (2000: 144). This study aimed to investigate how these masculine connotations were physically manifested in clothing and how they may come to define gender. Although this idea was previously noted, currently no work specifically investigates why women choose to wear male gendered clothing for fashion and this study proposed to address that knowledge gap by addressing the following aim and objectives listed below (Section).

Academia and theorists discussed fashion widely, and historians broadly document clothing as costume and dress. Academic work documenting detailed garment design practice was found from practitioners such as Bugg (2006), McQuillan (2011), Roberts (2013), and Lindqvist (2015). However, type of academic work was less commonly found. This study aimed to add to academic research in garment design practice, by recording and analysing the complex thinking behind garment design for women who wear men's clothing for fashion. It documented how historical archival study could be



reinterpreted for the development of clothing concepts in response to analysis of changing gendered social attitudes.

An output culminating in a selection of explorative garments, aimed to develop an experimental design approach informed by archival fieldwork, and by mixed methods investigations referencing how gender was assigned in clothing, and qualitative analysis of women's attitudes to gendered clothing.

### 1.1. Aim and objectives.

#### 1.1.1. Aim.

To develop design concepts informed by an observational analysis of shapes and construction methods in Victorian men's shirts and trousers and qualitative analysis of women's attitudes to gendered clothing.

#### 1.1.2. Objectives.

- 1. To critically review current theory in body image, objectification, self-discrepancy and identity communication, also gender related fashion theories, photography, phenomenology, and the construction of Victorian men's shirts and trousers.
- 2. To analyse how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources.
- 3. To critically analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.
- 4. To develop a conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image.
- 5. To develop an experimental design approach by reviewing and reflecting on the process of constructing a series of garments which respond to women's gender related preferences.
- 6. To evaluate the experimental design approach as a model for the development of clothing for women.

The study took an interdisciplinary mixed methods approach. The participant enquiry comprised of semi structured qualitative interviews, and these were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. To incite feedback on the final practice

outcomes, both online quantitative and face-to-face qualitative, methods were required, to capture responses from as many participants as possible. Quantitative online surveys were employed to gather wider opinion on how gender is assigned in clothing and the gendered perception of clothing on and off the body. Archival fieldwork was carried out at The Museum of London, The Victoria and Albert Museum, Platt Hall Manchester and the Wren Library Cambridge. This involved the observation and photographic recording of men's historical clothing and imagery of the Victorian Pit Brown Women. Garment design practice used unique experimental design approaches to produce a series of experimental garments in response to the preferences of the participant group.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Introduction.

This chapter addresses objective one by critically reviewing current theory in body image, sexual objectification, self-discrepancy and identity communication, also gender related fashion theories, photography, phenomenology, and historical dressing linked to gender. Specific topics reviewed within these theoretical fields are those initially identified as salient to the central theme of gender in clothing, and themes arising from the photographic pilot study (sections 3.3 and 4.3) participant enquiry (sections 3.4 and 4.4). Specifically, these topics deal with masculinity and femininity, women and gendered clothing, dressing a body shape and identity communication.

Gender is defined as, ‘social and cultural differences rather than biological ones’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017) and is used ‘to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017). The terms *masculinity* and *femininity* are commonly used descriptions of gender, they are discussed widely herein and formally defined here,

‘Feminine. **1** Possessing qualities considered typical of or appropriate to a woman **2** of women’ (Collins English Dictionary, 2016: 282).

‘Masculine. Possessing qualities or characteristics considered typical of or appropriate to a man: manly **2** unwomanly; not feminine’ (Collins English Dictionary, 2016: 479).

Historical avenues are explored in women who defied gender, focusing on the pit brow women of Wigan, and making connections with theories of hegemonic masculinities and how the historical marginalisation of women is connected to clothing now. Objective two, regarding how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources is addressed. The pit brow research became critical in informing the practice (sections 3.2 and 4.2), connecting theory and practice directly.

The topics addressed herein address objective 3 in enabling the critical analysis of why women choose to wear male gendered clothing. Fashion’s role in the sexualisation of the female body is discussed widely and connects to body image and the contribution

of fit. Dressing techniques are key in understanding the role of clothing in regulating and moderating the appearance of the body, incorporating feeling right in clothing, in relation to gender and connection to group identities.

Examples of designers exploring the body are selected with reference to the fields above and themes from the participant enquiry. These connect to fit, space in clothing, and feelings of wellbeing in wear. The choice of designers adheres to the researchers design thinking for the practice; it serves to demonstrate a selection of the field, not to review it, as the field is vast.

## 2.2. Masculinity and femininity

There is no natural link between an item of clothing and feminine and masculine; instead there is an arbitrary set of associations which are culturally specific (Entwistle, 2000:143)

Clothing is categorised in our psyche and within culture as women's or menswear, feminine or masculine, due to gendering of clothing. Connell (1995) suggests that masculinity and femininity are measured with reference to the other, and Hollander (2016) finds men's and women's clothing to be defined in the same way. Entwistle (2000) discusses how although binaries in fashion are beginning to break down, society still holds onto the distinctions between 'male' and 'female'. Clothing is described as masculine or feminine, such as suiting is masculine. These characteristics are ensconced into our culture through history and repetitive exposure, such that now they are seen as belonging to one gender or the other and may be labelled masculine and feminine. This section explores what masculinity and femininity are and how they are associated with clothing, and with men and women.

### 2.2.1. Femininity and woman as subordinate.

Craik (1994) sees femininity and masculinity as opposites, boldly stating that,

If femininity is characterised by attributes of weakness, passivity, submissiveness, self-control, nurturing, and emotionality, then masculine invokes the opposite attributes: strength, aggression, dominance, control, and toughness (1994:176-78).

Brownmiller (1986) similarly finds that the physical vulnerability stereotypically associated with femininity makes the male feel bigger and more masculine; thus, femininity complements masculinity. It could be suggested that femininity is always subordinate (Budgeon, 2014; Connell, 1987; Veblen, 1899), indeed Veblen (1899) described women as the subsidiary of men, and they were 'unwomanly' to deviate from this role (1899: 230). It seems that femininity is to be avoided; it is common to see women openly embody masculinity, but most heterosexual men would not allude to feminine characteristics. Budgeon (2014) suggests that feminine conventions such as fashion, beauty practices and characteristics as noted by Craik (1994) above, 'made femininity an object of feminist suspicion and denunciation' (2014: 320). Stereotypes of femininity and masculinity are historically embedded such as Veblen (1899), and although society has somewhat progressed, these structures have become default codes for categorising people and behaviours. Schippers (2007) discusses what she calls *pariah femininities*; masculine acts embodied by women such as, promiscuity 'slut', authoritative 'bitch'. Schippers (2007) believes that these acts by women challenge masculine dominance, because they are not subordinate. When men take on feminine characteristics, such as physical weakness or being sexually attracted to men they are feminine, 'because femininity is always and already inferior' (Schippers, 2007: 96). Budgeon (2014) advises that hybrid feminine forms [1990's] placing femininity alongside power and independence, and seeking to empower women, may not shift hierarchies of gender, but 'complicate 'the coherence of gender categories' (2014: 330). Femininity seems to have been repurposed for a second round.

Examples of the transgression of masculine and feminine stereotypes, specifically of the challenging of femininity as subordinate can be identified in social and cultural events from the 1970's onwards. This is clearly connected to the changing roles of women, and to how the aforementioned categorisation of people and behaviours began to be questioned. Of Woody Allen's 1977 film *Annie Hall*, Bruzzi (1997) states that in wearing men's clothing, Annie hides bodily indications of being feminine. It is clear in figure 2.2.1 however, that the character still exhibits stereotypically feminine characteristics and mannerisms. According to Buckley and Fawcett (2002) the style of *Annie Hall* pointed toward 'more complex and interesting choices than in the stereotypical *Charlies Angels* image that dominated certain areas of the media' (2002: 126). In comparison, as the



Figure 2.2.1. Diane Keaton in the role of Annie Hall 1977.



Figure 2.2.2. Margaret Thatcher wearing a suit and tie-neck blouse in 1983.

first woman prime minister in 1979, Margaret Thatcher took on masculine characteristics and dressed to exhibit authority in the severity of her suits, whilst at once exhibiting a feminine balance with a pussy bow blouse and lipstick, as seen in figure 2.2.2. In the 1980's Annie Lennox, similarly took on masculinity, but as a rage against the expectation for women to present themselves in a particular way, which for Lennox was



Figure 2.2.3. Annie Lennox's cult 80s style. Dazed (2015)

'discomfort at the expectation that as a woman in pop music, she should present herself in an overtly sexual way' (Rodger, 2004:20). Both Thatcher and Lennox, can be said to exhibit a sense of masculinity, both are powerful women and sought to transgress gender stereotypes in different ways. Margaret Thatcher in a political position of traditional masculinity seemed to manipulate gender stereotypes, to implement masculinity and authority in the role. Duff (2010) proposed that Thatcher exhibited the 'feminine and masculine at the same time' (2010: 181). According to Rodger (2004) Lennox expressed that as a feminine woman, she often felt power and masculinity; gender norms did not seem to allow for displays of masculinity in a heterosexual woman, therefore her style often triggered the assumption that Lennox was gay. In an act of visually challenging stereotypes, Lennox played-out different images of femininity, or homeovestism; deliberately dressing in feminine guise, as seen in figure 2.2.3. Lennox's gendered appearance accords with the influential sub-cultural Punk movement which

as Buckley and Fawcett (2002) observe 'interrogated the dominant tropes of heterosexuality' in exploration of women's clothing and fashion and sexualisation (2002:126). The early 1980's saw the post-Punk genre, and fashion influence from Japan in the form of designers such as Rei Kawakubo and Issey Miyake, offering a continuation of an alternative to an ultra-feminine style for women. The work of Rei Kawakubo is discussed below in section 2.3.1.

Butler's (2006) gender theory of performativity states that maintenance of compulsory heterosexuality [heterosexuality as the norm] is to do with repetition, in the sense that how to *do gender* is presented to us continually. This is additionally discussed below regarding fashion. The definitions of masculine and feminine are known, but it is safe to assume that they are not relevant to how most lives are lived now, being somewhat archaic and difficult to change. Butler (2006) suggests that gender norms of man and woman, are 'symbolic', such that they are representations of a supposed ideal, and are uninhabitable by any real person (Butler, 2006: 200). Goffman (1976) confirms Butler's statement, also stating that in advertisements gender is quickly conveyed using these known symbolic ideals. Not surprisingly, there is much criticism of how the media use stereotypes of femininity, because the definitions are limiting, and not reflective of how real people look or behave (Milkie 2002, Crane 1999).

#### 2.2.2. The creation of sexual difference through clothing.

'The creation of sexual difference in fashion is carried out in several ways. These include the display of skin, use of skirts versus trousers, the use of bright or pastel colours for women whilst men are restricted to greys and browns...' (Jeffreys, 2014: 81).

Brownmiller (1986) suggests that 'In a clothed culture the eye depends on artificial externals for its visual cues' (1986: 57). These gendered cues are social constructions, established by how cultures define femininity and masculinity; they become engrained like a 'social nature' (Malossi, 2000: 139). Brownmiller (1986) names these definitions 'sartorial signposts' and notes their importance 'in neatly framing gender for a culture which seems to require this clarification' (1986:57). Eicher (2001) offers an example in the gendered establishment of eveningwear that denotes that men wear suits and





*Figure 2.2.4. James Hamilton (1982) Philip Garners Better Living Catalogue.*

women dresses. Eicher's point is that evening gowns make a spectacle of showing women's skin, yet when seen on a man a similarly cut-away style is absurd (figure 2.2.4).

It should be noted that unlike dresses, suits are practical and functional; the jacket providing warmth and pockets storage, yet women must carry a bag for storage, and rarely wear jackets to such events. Matthews (2010) suggests that pockets denote sexual difference and this stems from the Victorian era when pockets interfered womenswear silhouettes. The feminine female body is used for display and is sexualised, yet 'men's bodies have never simply stood for sex; consequently, their clothes never have either' (Steele, 1989: 61). Hollander (2016) similarly reviews dressing at black tie events, finding that the man's character or his personal styling sets him apart, yet for women; the dress must set them apart. Thus, in some ways fashion defines women by what they are wearing, more so than men.

According to Craik (1994), 'masculinity constructs body techniques that communicate power and authority over the body and it's habitus as the locust of social status'(Craik 1994:158). In McQueen's femme fatale however, Evans (2001) finds a comparable femininity, a figure who suggested the terrifying power of women rather than their soft



*Figure 2.2.5. McQueen Spring 1997 (Vogue.com, 2017: online)*



*Figure 2.2.6. Vivienne Westwood Spring 2018 (Vogue.com, 2017: online)*

vulnerability; the sexuality of the female body juxtaposed with the sharp cut of the suit (figure 2.2.5). McQueen's suit is a reincarnation of a man's suit, but cut differently to define the waist and with elongated shoulders as a fashion feature. Hollander (2016) clarifies that for men 'the suit remains the uniform of official power...diplomacy, compromise, civility and physical self-control' (2016: 83), however this is not reflected in McQueen's womenswear version.

Malossi (2000), reviews female empowerment through fashion as the 'crisis of the male', describing that 'the time we live in is beginning to question the rough shell that covers the male gender...' (Malossi 2000:27). I disagree that this development was a 'crisis', as described by Malossi (2000), more these varied incarnations of masculine were descriptive of current gendered social attitudes. This less 'rough' incarnation of masculinity, is seen in current menswear collections, which place men in more traditionally feminine clothing. Figure 2.2.6, demonstrates femininity by displaying skin (Svendsen and Irons, 2006; Jeffreys, 2014). Westwood's cropped out-grown looking jacket is a style often seen in womenswear, which Laing (2014) suggests situates women in the childlike. These features can be likened to children's clothing or a doll aesthetic (Walter, 2010), with clothes often being cheaply made, tiny and revealing (Jeffreys, 2014).



*Figure 2.2.7a. Rick Owens Island, 2013(Rickowens.eu, 2019: online)*



*Figure 2.2.7b. Rick Owens Sphinx 2015(Rickowens.eu, 2019: online)*



*Figure 2.2.7c. Rick Owens Dirt, 2018 (Rickowens.eu, 2019: online)*



*Figure 2.2.8a. Saint Laurent, spring 2017 (Vogue.com, 2019: online)*



*Figure 2.2.8b. Valentino, winter 2019 (Vogue.com, 2019: online)*



*Figure 2.2.8c. Alexander McQueen, spring 2020 (alexandermcqueen.com, 2019: online)*

Bancroft (2016) discusses femininity and masculinity in examination of Rick Owens's Sphinx collection (2015), where the model's penises are partially revealed via robes with holes (figure 2.2.7b). Exposing the male body was shocking and placed it within sexualisation and thus within femininity. The feminine female body is continually exposed and displayed and this is not shocking or unexpected, because the feminine is subordinate (section 2.2.1). Bancroft (2016) finds that fashion is grounded in femininity.

This established feminised practice of decoration, manipulation and display is noted by Bancroft as fashion's unique gateway for the exploration of gender boundaries in menswear. To expand on Bancroft's ideas, examination of Owens' wider work reveals the designer as a good example of this (figure 2.2.7). Indeed, prior and subsequent work contextualises Sphinx, showing the collection as typical of Owens' work that partially reveals the body and explores gender. Shocked responses to Sphinx suggest it was a step too far towards the feminine. It could be said that repeated sexualisation of the female body has normalized it. The breasts, buttocks and occasionally even glimpses of the genital area are exposed in catwalk shows, usually through sheer fabric; however, nakedness is not uncommon (figure 2.2.8). It is interesting how fashion repeatedly applies norms of feminine and masculine to female and male bodies, and when this changes or is moved gender is confusing. According to Schippers (2007) and Butler (2006), these patterns of gender are learned and repeated, not only on bodies, but in societal structures. These notions of gender change with time, the process is slow, however it is clear to see that Veblen's (1899: 230) 'ancillary' woman is no longer relevant, in the sense that women have more agency. Svendsen and Irons (2006) identify the likelihood that changes in gendered attitudes are reflected in the way men and women dress and this can be seen in Owens' work above.

### 2.3. Women and gendered clothing.

This section explores the relationship between women and gendered clothing. This is done by reviewing how designers associate with gender or apply design thinking that addresses the body differently, developing clothing for women that does not start with decoration or sexualising. Gendered clothing combinations are explored in *balancing masculine and feminine* and *women who defied gender*; addressing how visual identities can be constructed by working with the tools of fashion and personal gender associations. The pit bow women section combines literature with historical photography to explore the practicalities of the women's workwear. This is discussed with regard to gender in clothing and historical social structures. Carte-de-visite from the Victorian era will give historical context and add depth to the archival research into Victorian men's shirts and trousers (sections 3.2, 4.2).

#### 2.3.1. Designers exploring the body and addressing gender.

Rei Kawakubo creates womenswear that often distorts the body shape using fabric or padding; the wearer is never constricted, but the visual is often unrecognisable as a body shape. Western design traditionally starts with fitting to the body and uses flat cutting methods derived from tailoring that address body shape directly. Svendsen and Irons (2006) suggest that Kawakubo's work can seem 'unnatural' from a Western perspective, and that this response identifies 'to what extent our way of looking is determined by these conventions' (2006: 89). Wilson (2005) suggests that ideas about what is attractive in fashion are changing, naming the phenomenon the 'aesthetic of ugly' (2005: 130); Kawakubo's garments challenge norms of femininity in terms of beauty and delicacy, as the feminine dress becomes outsized and engulfs, serving to 'rewrite the body' (Svendsen and Irons, 2006: 89). Mower (2016) described how 'to watch this parade of enormous, sculptural pieces was to wonder whether her subject might really be the invisibility of women, rather than clothes' (2016: online). Indeed, oversizing as a mask for the body is notable in Kawakubo's collection (figure 2.3.1).



*Figure 2.3.1. Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons. Spring 2017(Vogue.com, 2019: online).*



*Figure 2.3.2. Pauline Van Dongen, Morphogenesis, 2010 (notjustalabel.com, 2019: online).*



Methods working with volume and shape seen in Kawakubo's work are interesting in redefining the relationship of clothing with the body. Kawakubo described her spring 2017 collection for Comme des Garçons as 'invisible clothes' (Kawakubo cited in Mower, 2016: online). Kawakubo seems to respond to invisibility by enswathing the female form. By taking recognisable clothing shapes and extending them beyond the body boundaries, the body is masked but remains integral to understanding the garment, as one cannot exist without the other. Of Kawakubo's work Negrin (2016) suggests,

'...the boundaries between body and dress are blurred such that the garments become a prosthetic extension of the body rather than being separable from it. Clothing and the body become indistinguishable from each other' (Negrin, 2016: 127).

Kawakubo seems to work in collaboration with the body; with reference to phenomenology, Negrin (2016) places this body-garment *interaction* within all dressing as the site of embodiment. Negrin's suggestion is that the body is how people connect to the world, in the sense that bodies are how the world physically and socially understands people. In *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Barad (2007) discusses a collaboration between two matters, such as Kawakubo's body-garment configuration, as 'intra-actions', in the sense that the action emerges from within a relationship between two matters of agency. Barad (2007) proposes that this intra-activity of matters, both animate and inanimate possesses '...a new sense of aliveness' which is dynamic and provides opportunity for the 'reconfiguring' of the relationship (2007: 177). For the purpose of this PhD and the human-garment intra-action, Barad's *reconfiguring* could be connected to external cultural and social influences or trends. Such influences can impact the viewer or wearers appraisal of the intra-action, and thus of how the body is seen to exist in the world. Post-human theory such as that of Barad (2007) locating garments in a place of agency, provides underpinning for the practice method which is grounded in the designer-maker and fabric-garment intra-action as discussed in section 5.3.3.

Contrasting and textural materials enhanced visual impact and wearer experience of Pauline Van Dongen's (2010) womenswear collection Morphogenesis, and explored space between the garment and the wearer. What is noticeable about the example (figure 2.3.2 above) is that the shape around the body creates only an illusion of space.

The inner is tight, but crumples suggesting it is not restrictive; however, the experience of tightness can cause discomfort. 'Clothing is encountered through the senses, with touch and sight mediating the wearer's experience of a garment' (Quinn, 2012: 32). This notion connects with Merleau-Ponty's (1962) phenomenology, which places the body as active and central to our experience of the world. Smelik et al. (2016) suggest that phenomenology as a 'conceptual tool' can be used to address how the wearer experiences the garment (2016: 289). Thinking about embodiment of the clothing and the experience of wearing the garment is interesting when presented with work such as Van Dongen's dress, which juxtapositions coverage, and revealing, artificially exposing the body, but simultaneously suggesting space.

At 69US, the identity of the models is often concealed by covering the face and skin, which obscures indications of gender in bodies consumed in cloth (figure 2.3.3). This serves to block out ways in which the viewer would categorise, and it does this very well. Craik explains that,

'There is a dynamic and iterative relationship between the body techniques of the wearer and the interpretations of the viewer and how we understand or read what we see and experience' (Craik, 1994: 158).

Masking of gender continues into the clothing design, which is often oversized. It is interesting how wide garments can be manipulated to suit different bodies in different ways, using methods of drawing in and wrapping around. 69US state that they are 'an all-inclusive denim lifestyle brand' (69US.com, 2019: online). Indeed, the clothing is trans-seasonal, non-gendered and is generously sized thus suited to most body types. The clothing is multifunctional; the denim wrap tunic is especially adaptable, suitable for very large and very slim bodies.

Yohji Yamamoto designs clothing for women, but with a menswear approach; the collections do not pertain to be gender free, but do not sexualise the female form (figure 2.3.4). Yamamoto stated that, 'men's clothing is more pure in design. It's more simple and has no decoration. Women want that' (Yamamoto cited in Duka, 1983: online). Yamamoto uses plain fabrics and stripe shirting in the examples; it is notable that the





Figure 2.3.3. 69US, 2017. (Vogue.com 2019: online).



Figure 2.3.4. Yohji Yamamoto Y's, spring 2017. (Vogue.com, 2019: online).

clothing has some common menswear characteristics such as braces and fit, and some from womenswear such as chiffon and the skirt. I suggest however, that this womenswear is neither masculine nor feminine, and attribute this to considered combinations of styling, details and fabrics that balance the styles; for example masculine loose trousers with braces and a plain strap tied at the waist. What makes Yamamoto unique is his ability to dress the character of a woman, rather than presenting her as sexual. Hollander (2016) discusses the man's suit as possessing 'sober beauty and subtle surfaces' (2106: 82), and this could apply to the work of Yamamoto.

### 2.3.2. Balancing masculine and feminine

Wilson (2005) introduces the idea that a woman who is not dressed in an expressly feminine way is not automatically androgynous. Referencing Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo, she states that 'the mysterious quality of their allure comes in part from a hint of manliness at the very heart of their feminine presence' (Wilson, 2005: 120). Figure 2.3.5 demonstrates how Marlene Dietrich uses stance and pose to create Wilson's (2005) 'allure'. Dietrich is not adhering to stereotypical constructions of



Figure 2.3.5. Marlene Dietrich in a Chanel suit, 1933(Source: home2hollywood, 2017: online)

femininity such as display of skin, however by embodying the clothing with her own sense of identity; she creates a balance in the presentation of her female self in the masculine clothing. In explanation of this and from a phenomenological viewpoint, Negrin (2016) suggests that,

This demonstrates clearly how the gendered nature of the body of the wearer impacts on the clothing that is worn. The body is not a neutral surface onto which sign are imprinted, but has its own materiality, which influences the way clothes are experienced both by the wearer and those around them (2016: 124).

Davis (1994) suggested that masculine styling on women can be balanced by a symbol of femininity, such as by the use of lipstick in the image of Dietrich, or how in the 1960s women ‘...bared their thighs to the crotch, yet veiled their faces with curtains of hair parted in the middle like a Victorian maiden’s’ (Wilson, 2005: 5). In this way, women are seen to counterbalance overtly masculine or feminine looks. This method, dubbed ‘compensatory femininity’ by Brownmiller (1999), is the way a person may add to their outfit or present it in such a way as to create a balance between masculinity and femininity. Work by street photographers Scott Schuman *The Sartorialist*, and Tommy Ton exemplifies the technique in the short boyish hair with short skirt (figure 2.3.6) and marrying of boiler suit with headscarf (figure 2.3.7). This dressing technique is rarely



Figure 2.3.6. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Schuman (2015). Figure 2.3.7. Fashion Week, Ton (2015).

discussed, but it is the way people dress daily, and how they see themselves or wish to be seen. It is intricate details that may not be noticed by the viewer. Hollander (2016) suggests that appraisal of clothing is broadly categorised, with outfit details being linked to 'personal muttering' (2016: 141). I agree, however would question whether these details are for viewer at all, but exist to satisfy the complex identity of the wearer. Rocamora and Barrlett (2012) argue that photographers such as Schuman and Ton have the skill to identify the 'ability to display an idiosyncratic approach' (2012: 296).

It could be suggested that entirely masking the body in loose clothing (figure 2.3.7), would eliminate signs of femininity. Wilson (2005) finds however, that the wearing of menswear that hides the body often enhances women's femininity. Indeed, Yohji Yamamoto (2011) states that, 'the more she hides and abandons her femininity, the more it emerges from the very heart of her existence' (Yamamoto, 2011: online). Yamamoto, could be considered somewhat essentialist in his notion that women *have* femininity. It is possible to interpret the suggestion as a statement about character becoming illuminated when the body is hidden, in the sense that plain clothes accentuate facial characteristics or as for Negrin (2016) that women's embodiment of the clothing may differ in accordance with clothing styles. Yamamoto's design archive connotes non-sexualised ideals for womenswear (section 2.3.1), and this could be his point here.

### 2.3.3. Women who defied gender convention: Pit brow women

The mining women had a quite specific working costume that marked them out from other working-class women; they wore workingmen's trouser-breeches, often accompanied by a man's jacket, and this made them signify masculinity more forcefully than other female trades. It is this that has been caught by the camera (Edge, 2016:67).

Pit-brow women were surface labourers at British collieries. The physical and dangerous nature of the work necessitated a move away from conventional womenswear, to a more masculine costume. Figure 2.3.8 demonstrates the wearing of men's trouser-breeches alongside the women's usual feminine attire. This woman appears bold and confrontational as she stares into the camera; such that the body reacts physically to the clothing (Negrin, 2016). The Victorian man in response has the appearance of



Figure 2.3.8. Pit-brow woman, 1900, (National archives, 2017: Online).



Figure 2.3.9. Victorian man carte-de-visite, 1886(Manchester Art Gallery, 2017: online)

cordiality, note the closed posture and inactivity of the hands in a clasped pose (figure 2.3.9). Edge (2016) notes, with reference to Linkman (1993), that stance and pose detail such as the workers' boots, feet apart stance, active hands and working props of tool of the trade were all stereotypical signifiers of masculinity. Indeed Hollander (1993) finds that twentieth century women in trousers similarly adopt 'a *natural sprawl*, borrowed from men' (1993: 93). Davidoff (1979) explains of the Victorian era that 'hands take on a special significance and play a central role in both class and gender imagery' (1979: 111). Such is so that the small hands of the Victorian man are passive and feminine compared to the working hands of the pit woman.

The treatment of the women was tantamount to the deep-seated gender binaries and class difference. Male workwear was seen to unsex the women, such that 'trousers were seen as a blatant manifestation of defeminising' (John, 1980: 180). Comparatively, Wilson (2005) described women's fashions of the early Victorian period as portraying '...ballet-dancer fragility...' (2005: 29), exacerbating the public distain for the pit brow women's bulky workwear. One interpretation could be that a labour based working role, and the adoption of masculine clothing, had the women physically and visually defy

conventions of the female body as weak and submissive. Veblen (1899) described how men's and women's apparel was set apart by the fact that womenswear purposefully rendered her incapable of useful duties, and according to Veblen this places her above the 'imputation of vulgarly productive labour' (1899: 114). Middle class women as the site of femininity were ensconced in the home, with men going out to work; thus not only were the working class pit women situated in the masculine outdoors, but Edge (2018) suggests that their visibility made them objectified by the men.

Indeed, photographs of pit brow girls in dirty work attire sold under pornographic spheres (Edge, 2016), and the women were the focus of voyeurism (John, 2013). It is possible that the normative view of women as secondary to men (Veblen, 1899), was challenged by the women who performed manly working roles, and as defined by Schippers' (2007) *pariah femininities*, they threatened hegemonic masculinity. Edge (2016) explains how the women enjoyed having photographs taken and were proud to work at the pit, embracing the hard work and traditional industry. This was serious work, and it could be argued that the sexist act of voyeurism by men attempts to belittle the role, returning the women to a place of subordination. The women exhibit behaviours of feminism in the ownership of masculine roles. The adoption of purposeful clothing for work makes steps towards functional and practical clothing for women. Further exploration and discussion of the pit brow women in sections 3.2 and 4.2.

Hollander (2016) acknowledges that to improve women's clothes, it has been necessary to borrow from menswear. As for the pit brow women, often men's clothing chosen by women is selected for practicality and functional uses, for example women have adopted the trouser because it frees the legs and has pockets. Large usable pockets are not common for current slim womenswear styles. Matthews (2010) suggests that over the nineteenth century women were largely denied internal pockets, he describes women as a regulated commodity, such that the unsightly bulge of a pocket could not interrupt her shape. Gender is embedded and repeated in clothing; Victorian man dressed conservatively, and without change, he was inconspicuous, but quietly paid attention to detail, fit and quality (Craik, 1994); womenswear was decorative and incapacitating.



## 2.4. Dressing a body shape.

Svendsen and Irons (2006) find that fashion tends to dictate an ideal body shape, and that this forms a 'dialogue', as body and fashion trends push and pull each other, thus how we appraise the body is dependent on fashion. This section investigates how people interact with clothing and fashion trends to dress their body, and what impacts choice.

### 2.4.1. The body as a social and cultural object.

It could be said that female body styles are varied in today's Western societies, with an open dialogue about larger bodies and brands such as Boohoo catering for plus size and curvy bodies. Murray (2008) finds that the fat body does not realise beauty norms, which could similarly apply to the skinny body; being obviously different can cause anxiety (Argyle, 1994). Body maintenance is an indication of control (Featherstone, 2010), consequently overweight can be considered to signify lack self-control or lazy (Svendsen and Irons, 2006; Murray, 2008). Current body ideals for women are thin and muscular (Bozsik et al. 2018: 609), with focus on gym training and muscles, the skinny body could be said to equally signify lazy. The skinny body as problematic is rarely discussed, indeed some may say that the thin body is envied, or debased as the source of body concerns. Indeed Grogan (2016) found that models seen in the media were considered too thin, or skinny, yet women still aspired to that body. According to self-discrepancy theory, the body is compared to cultural norms from the perspective of the self and of the other (e.g., friends) (Higgins, 1987). This creates a conflicted experience with the body, which Boulton (2003) states can lead 'to feelings of ambivalence in which the body is both loved and hated.' (2003: 241) An individual may aspire to an 'ought body', the body ideal constructed in consideration of parameters such as age, build and trends. Grogan (2016) states that upward social comparisons can be a cause of dissatisfaction with the body, with downward social comparisons being more positive.

'The common thread running through all forms of sexual objectification is the experience of being treated as a body (or collection of body parts) valued predominantly for its use to (or consumption by) others' (Fredrickson, 1997: 173).

The body can become focal for both the person and the viewer, dehumanizing the person, which is exacerbated by media and advertising. Phenomenological theories place the body into a place of agency, and can begin to counteract the notion of male and female bodies as objects (Negrin, 2016). It is interesting that Argyle (1994) suggested that both men and women feel observed by one another; yet women monitor their appearance more vicariously than men do. Women's bodies are scrutinised, with advertising and the media promoting images of ideal body shape, and how body types signal personal characteristics, or denote masculinity and femininity (Featherstone, 1991, 2010; Finkelstein, 2010).

#### 2.4.2. Fit and body shape

Fit is unique to the wearer and is to do with how clothing feels on the body. Grogan (2017) finds that body size issues in women are exacerbated when trying on clothes or if their own clothes do not fit. *Too tight* clothing is restrictive, thus this can make the wearer feel fat because the body is too big for the clothes. Interesting for this study is Murray's statement that the fat body 'will not fit' (2008: 5); physically and socially does *not fit*. It could be suggested that fashion trends create the issue, positing slim, *normal* shaped as an ideal body. The cut of fashion clothing often does not fit or suit the differing proportions of a fat body; this is to do with body shape as well as size. It is important to note that a thin body type can also be difficult to dress, for example fitting the shoulders and chest can mean clothing becomes too short.

Loose clothing hanging off the body, can look good for many body shapes. This method of dressing that creates space around the body (section 2.3.1), can instil feelings of lightness or small in the wearer; in contrast to tightness that can reduce body confidence (Grogan, 2017; Grogan et al. 2013). Notably, Bugg (2006) finds that clothing can add shapes to the body, restrict or free it. Clothing that hangs off the body can feel freeing through the availability of space between clothing and body, it can 'rewrite the body, give it a different shape and a different expression' (Svendsen and Irons, 2006: 77).

Grogan (2017) Grogan et al. (2013) found that women tend to use clothing to achieve the body shape they want, and because fit is subjective (Boulton, 2003; Quinn, 2012), this can mean different things to different women. This could be skimming the body



entirely or using clothing shapes to counteract the proportions of the body, such as a loose or wide shouldered top can offset wide hips, or dark clothing on a larger area can have the effect of reducing its size to the viewer. Alternatively, thin women or those of small stature may wish to take up more space or mask the body, by wearing loose or voluminous garments. Boulton and Jerrard (2000) consider that fashion is about covering the body with the ideal. If compulsory heterosexuality (Butler, 2006) is considered foundational in gendered societal structure, then it could be suggested that by maintaining female body ideals women repeat and reinforce constructions of gender.

#### 2.4.3. Confidence and feeling right.

Boulton (2003) finds that the meeting of body with clothing, the 'interface', is the point at which the wearer can generate a clothing solution, which satisfies conflicting needs. Fabric tactility is connected to how a person feels when clothing is in contact with the body (Quinn, 2012; Negrin, 2016). This means that balanced clothing combinations obliterate ambivalence, thus the wearer feels *right*. Here the inference is towards personal style and dressing in ways to induce comfort; comfort is associated with both physical and psychological comfort (Woodward, 2005).

'Comfort has not a consensual definition, however, great part of the researchers agree that comfort is a multidimensional and subjective experience' (Matte and Broega, 2017: 1).

Personal style can be variable with mood, however for the most part a person's personal style repeats elements. Goffman (1976) posits that the repetition of bodily appearance is a means of control and protection in daily life, which in some part explains how clothing combinations can evoke these feelings. Emotions evoked through the wearing of clothing can influence a person's bodily behaviours (Boulton, 2003; Bugg, 2006; Woodward, 2005). In doing so, it could be suggested that the impact of clothing is wider than the visual, such that in evoking positive emotions, the right clothing can physically benefit the wearer.

## 2.5. Identity communication.

‘Fashions are expressions of some version of the world; they exist as living images of a viewpoint, an angle, and one take on an idea. As such, they join the rich history of the portrait as a tool for grasping the infinitely diverse ways in which we can conceptualize ourselves, play with how we might appear to others, and shape the social world in which we want to live’ (Finkelstein, 2010: 170).

This section investigates how clothing and fashion, as explained by Finkelstein, can act to define a person and situate them within society, and what can influence choice motivations for dressing.

### 2.5.1. Fragmented societies.

Svendsen and Irons (2006) make the point that modern societies are fragmented when compared to socially structured cultures of the past, such that ‘they are no longer characterised by a self-evident set of values that the individual internalises’ (Svendsen and Irons, 2006: 147). Modern identities are pluralistic, in the sense that they encourage multifaceted identities maintained by consumer goods that produce ‘distinction(s)’ and ‘status stratification’ (Baudrillard, 1998: 13). These identities do not circulate so tightly around dated classifications of class and gender, but can be connected to self-expressive and lifestyle branding (Chernev et al. (2011). It is possible that these often manufactured facades, are a response to fragmented modern societies and are a means of *fitting in*, as defined by feeling a part of a group and not an outsider. Woodward (2005) finds that material culture is seen to project onto clothing associations with identities, gender, and roles in society, and Woodward suggests that clothing ‘practice’ can visually communicate a semblance of the self through the viewers and the wearers predisposed ideas about these associations. The visual image is central to how people live, visual communication through platforms such as Instagram is daily and we trust the image as it communicates to us. Fashion branding relies on the repeated visual imagery of the logo. Branding and the associated values of ‘quality value and status’ can be purchased along with the fashion goods (Finkelstein, 2010: 165). Veblen’s (1899) theory of conspicuous consumption discussed how a person’s consumption habits could define them in the Victorian era, and the theory similarly

applies here with reference to how combinations of fashion goods as outfits, may assemble an identity. This is most clearly linked to heavily branded street or sportswear, where for example a bold Adidas logo may juxtaposition with a vintage flowery dress, or formal trousers. In this way, a unique identity is communicated through affinity with a brand. Combined with personal principles about sustainability projected via the wearing of vintage, multiple connections are made with group belonging, yet individuality is established (Boulton, 2000; González, 2012).

#### 2.5.2. Belonging

A sense of belonging can link to the internalisation of ideals for the self and to the expectations that we perceive others have of us. Social identity theory, as proposed by Turner and Tajfel (1986), states that group belonging contributes to a person's sense of self. Attaining group belonging involves identifying a social category, taking on the group identity, and comparing the group with others; groups can be multiple and the self is adaptable. Schippers (2007) suggests that the configuration of masculinities and femininities are changeable between groups and settings. Therefore, when dressing individuals may employ what they know about social groups and occasions, a wedding for example, has particularly gendered expectations for dressing. Goodrum (2001) finds that '...the clothed body may be viewed as a cultural product...crucial in the creation of conformity, a feeling of shared belonging...' (2001: 87). Thus, dressing for a gendered identity, whether this means conforming to expectations or deviating from the norm, is a complex demonstration of how you would like to be perceived or accepted, which, '...reflects people's understanding of themselves in terms of cultural definitions of male and female' (Wood & Eagly, 2015: 461). Regarding the complexity of identities Negrin (2016) finds that, decisions made specifically for an occasion 'cannot be understood in isolation from this' (2016: 125). Within social groups, Hebdige (1979) warned that the need to *fit in* and to *stand out* is a careful balance for fashion innovators, to avoid stepping out of the group. However, Hollander (2016) analyses 'uniforms' or group identity, and finds that although the preference for individuality has people outwardly reject sameness 'most people prefer to wear garments in which they feel safely similar to their fellows' (2016: 139).

### 2.5.3. Expressing Identities.

Church Gibson (2000) believes that ‘...fashion is a storehouse of identity kits of surface parts which, assembled, determine the interior essence which is subsequently taken to determine the assemblage itself’ (Church Gibson, 2000:356). Church Gibson says that clothing is taken to determine the interior essence of an individual, yet does not say it *is* or really *does* that. Butler (2006) similarly says that performativity of gender is not a description of a reality, or the internal, but a point at which cultural and gender norms meet. It could be said that dressing techniques are associated with internal feelings of the self, and how we wish to be presented. Performativity posits that these supposed internal feelings are bound to gender inextricably and unconsciously, in the same way that all aspects of dress are (Butler, 2006). This is not to say that identity is fixed. Kaiser (1997) describes the act of ‘minding appearances’ as the constant appraisal of one’s style, in connection with influences such as culture, and political ideas which are specific to the moment. Thus, dressing is a changeable combination of self, normalcy and cultural expectation. (Woodward 2005, Entwistle 2001, Craik 1993, Goffman 1971), and these formations of identity are constantly developing reflections of how someone wishes to be viewed. For Bugg (2006), dressing is performing and delivering a message about the self. It is important to note in relation to Butler’s gender theory of *performativity*, that *performance*, as for Bugg, is connected to choice and Butler describes it as, ‘...the commodification of gender, and the understanding of taking on a gender as a kind of consumerism’ (Butler, 1992, cited in Kotz : online).

Fashion can be expressive; it can be creative and enable the wearer to explore the possibilities of garment combinations (Boultonwood, 2003). Finkelstein (2010) states that fashion wants to stand out and to maximise the bodies’ potential for difference, by attempting the new. Wilson (2005) agrees and suggests that busy lives create the desire to make immediate impact. Fashion is one of the few ways that women can express themselves with freedom (Wilson, 2005), and this can be done in tiny details (2.3.2) or with wild gestures. Fashion is a visual representation, a thought, and a momentary idea of an individual. Finkelstein (2010) describes how the performance of identity has become normalised, and people have learned how to mediate it to suit situations. However, as discussed throughout, identity construction is more than performance,

forming deep connections to internalised feelings of the self. Positioned in the feminine and subordinate (section 2.2.1), fashion has often been berated as superficial (Wilson, 2005), however fashion is identified here as key to the wellbeing of all people, especially those on the boundaries of gender identity.

## 2.6. Summary

This review connected with the wider study in reinforcing themes derived from the participant enquiry. It identified that the role of gender, including the use of the terms masculinity and femininity, are integrated into social and cultural living. This suggested theoretical underpinning for the participant themes and outlined how gender theories may drive the clothing preferences of women who wear men's clothing. Butler's (2006) gender theory of performativity placed compulsory heterosexuality as foundational to gendered societal structures and organisations including fashion. This was reflected in clothing with menswear as functional and practical, covering the body without sexualising, yet womenswear design was seen to sexualise the female body as the site of fragile femininity and subordination. Some would argue that negative associations could drive avoidance of the feminine for both men and women, and this could indicate why women may choose to wear men's clothing. Balance of masculine and feminine clothing was discussed at length, in the sense that hints of both can create a coherent gendered appearance for an individual. This may be seen to be play on gender, or a fashion technique, however this balance has been noted positively throughout the review as a method for creating wellbeing through dressing. This study is unique in its focus on this balance, and aims to recreate it within experimental garments for women who wear menswear. The review covers theoretical discussion about binaries of clothing, but does not suggest how non-binary garments could begin to satisfy the dressing needs of this specific group. That is not to say that this clothing does not exist, however it is not specifically represented within the main gender theories. A phenomenological approach can help in unpacking these complex identities for clothing design, in the sense of understanding the relationship between body and garment. The body as active in the wearing of clothing was clear, and the body should not be

marginalised to a role of passivity. Indeed, clothing designed conceptually, and in collaboration with the body, was shown to yield interesting and varied results that did not seek to sexualise, but provided space, which may be a catalyst for positive body image and emotions. This study seeks to extend on this thinking by providing academic work documenting the development of clothing for women who wear menswear, which may provoke further theoretical discussion in the future.

## Chapter 3 Methods

### 3.1. Introduction.

Methods for three areas of research are presented in this chapter.

- Archival.
  - Clothing archives, in section 3.2.3. Victorian men's shirts and trousers, and historical adjustable fit solutions.
  - Work wear of the Victorian pit brow women, in section 3.2.4.
- Photographic pilot study, in section 3.3.
- Participant enquiry, in section 3.4.

Each research area responds to themes generated from the literature review, and informs the practice. A mixed methods approach, ensured only methods appropriate to the research area were implemented; reflecting the interdisciplinary placement of this PhD. The objectives addressed by each research method are indicated therein.

The clothing archival research links theory and practice; adjustable fit solutions as construction techniques, connect with fashion theories about space around the body (section 2.3). It responded visually and sartorially to the review by investigating Victorian menswear garments; an era identified with inherently split gender roles. Additionally, the Victorian pit brow women research (section 2.3.3), demonstrated the women's use of clothing in the era. Reading garments and imagery was approached from the perspective of the designer-maker, rather than dress historian. Methods extrapolated detail and shapes to inform the practice.

The photographic pilot study utilised how the viewer assesses people by appearance (section 2.5), it collated responses about the gendered perception of clothing on women by presenting photographs of women in real life mix-gendered outfits. Significant findings were investigated further in the participant interviews, using photographs from the pilot.

The participant enquiry used interview and analysis methods from social psychology. Overarching phenomenological thinking linked the participant interview analysis with theories of clothing embodiment and identity, and design thinking (section 2.3). The participant enquiry continued into the practice section, where the women provided feedback on the practice outcomes (section 5.4).

### 3.2. Archival research

#### 3.2.1. Overview

The archival research was made up of two primary research sections. The first was in clothing archives, focusing initially on historical adjustable fit solutions in menswear, and then Victorian men's shirts and trousers; from collections at The Museum of London (MOL), The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) and Platt Hall, Manchester Art Gallery (Platt Hall). Secondly, archival investigation was conducted on the clothing of Victorian women pit brow workers in Wigan via the photographic collection of A.J. Munby, which was viewed at the Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge. Jenkyn-Jones (2011) explains how new ideas for garment development can grow from taking inspiration from history, with Bugg (2006) describing use of 'reflection on past precedents' within her practice led PhD (2006: 9). For this interdisciplinary PhD, the archival research provided a logical connection between theory and practice. The literature review (sections 2.2.2 and 2.3.3) discusses how the Victorian era saw widening of the gender gap for men's and women's fashions (Wilson, 2005), and it was this that created discussion around topics such as culturally and historically embedded norms of masculinity and femininity. Whilst the connected primary archival research provided visual starting points and information about construction for the practice. Kawamura (2011) states that by combining primary observational research with other disciplines the objects can become contextualised, thus a narrative can begin to be developed. The rationale for both archival investigations is below, with fieldwork discussed throughout and presented in table 3.2.3 in section 3.2.2. This investigation responded to the objectives as detailed in table 3.2.1



Objective	Method	Justification
1 - To critically review current theory in body image, objectification, self-discrepancy and identity communication, also gender related fashion theories, photography, phenomenology, and the construction of Victorian men's shirts and trousers.	Direct observation of Victorian men's shirts and trousers and historical clothing adjustment methods.	Using the primary investigation of artefacts that relate directly to current theory, to aid in the critical review of literature in a practice based study.
	Observational analysis of the work wear of Victorian women pit brow workers.	
2 - To critically analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.	Observational analysis of the work wear of Victorian women pit brow workers.	Observing and analysing the primary sources and employing findings to critically analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.
5 - To develop an experimental design approach by reviewing and reflecting on the process of constructing a series of garments that respond to women's gender related preferences.	Direct observation of Victorian men's shirts and trousers and historical clothing adjustment methods.	Identifying shapes and construction details, and using this to develop an experimental approach to constructing a series of garments that respond to women's gender related preferences.
	Observational analysis of the work wear of Victorian women pit brow workers.	

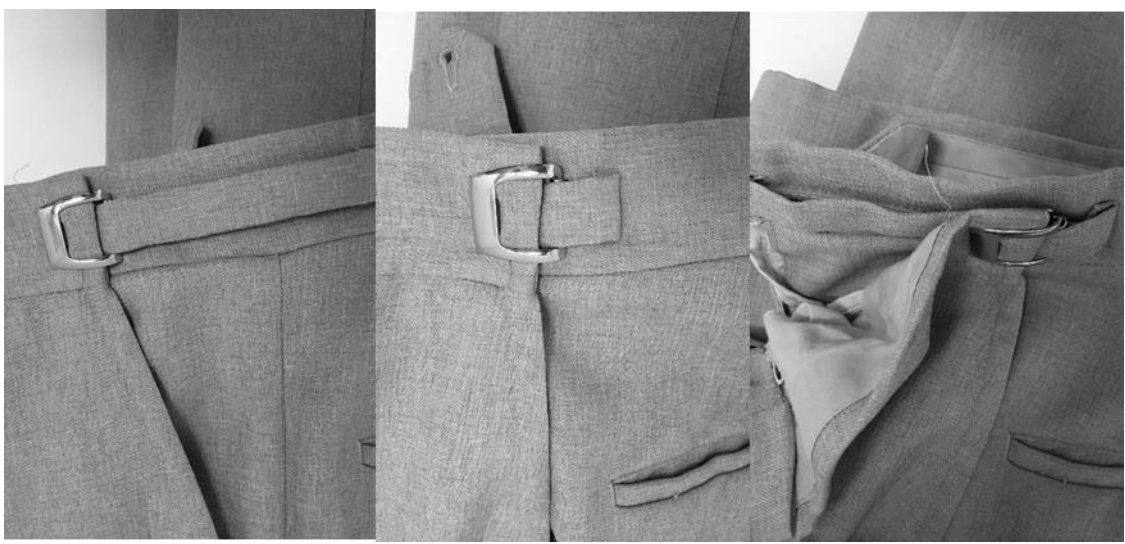
*Table 3.2.1. Justification of methods in relation to objectives.*

### 3.2.2. Rationale

#### *3.2.2.1. Clothing archival research: phase one.*

Initially, the use of archival collections was of interest as a means of investigating historical adjustable fit solutions in menswear. Motivated by an interest in creating garments to fit a range of bodies, an adjustable fit could also enable the wearer to wear the garment tight or loose. Interest was sparked by a pair of 1970's trousers with a sliding adjuster (figure 3.2.2). This was the prompt for finding other adjustment methods and for focusing on historical examples; the date range was open, this was to ensure a broad scope when searching collections.

This research thread produced useful findings (section 4.2), moreover, the thread triggered wider archival investigation by instigating further reading (phase 2) and generating a focus on Victorian shirts and trousers, which became the main archival study.



*Figure 3.2.2. 1970's men's trousers with sliding adjuster.*

A search of the catalogues at the V&A and MOL, found that the V&A had a large collection of Victorian men's shirts and trousers (phase two); the dress and textiles collection at the MOL provided a varied range of men's clothing items across a wider date range. It was logical therefore to request adjustable clothing examples from the latter collection.

#### *3.2.2.2. Rationale. Clothing archive research: phase two.*

Early reading demonstrated that for this interdisciplinary study the Victorian era creates an important and logical link between practice and theory, as a period which marks the standardisation of menswear garments as we know them (Petrov, 2016); providing clear direction towards Victorian menswear. The field was narrowed to focus on shirts and trousers; concentrating on fewer garment types facilitated deeper investigation. The garment choice was logical as men's shirts and trousers were included in the photographic pilot study (section 3.3, 4.3). The choice made connections to subsequent stages of the study, as shirts and trousers were among the key menswear items worn by the participant group (section 4.4). This second phase of the archival research initially aimed to identify recurring sartorial characteristics that, as culturally and historically embedded characteristics of menswear, could be signifiers of masculinity for the viewer. This was done by noting characteristics of each item, such as collars, and cuffs, and by measuring them to check for continuity. This was implemented alongside recording of the whole garment using methods as described in section 3.2.1. This method was carried out at fieldwork visits in 2017, firstly at The V&A, followed by two visits to Platt Hall, Manchester.

*3.2.2.3. Rationale. Clothing archive research: phase three.*

Whilst working with the artefacts, the researcher became fascinated with shapes seen in the shirts and trousers, and the methods and proportions in the construction. These are listed below and explained in section 4.2.

- Specifically, when examining Victorian square cut shirts at Platt Hall, Manchester,
  - *scale the relative size or extent of something,*
  - *proportion the comparative measurements or size of different parts of a whole.*
- Reinforcement (shirts and trousers)
- Shapes which create a 'V' (shirts and trousers)
- Shapes made by the whole constructed garment (shirts and trousers)
- Gathering and creasing (shirts)

It became important to acknowledge the scale of these men's shirts and the possible connection to embedded masculinity in clothing, when considering that, as noted by Brownmiller (1986) men are often physically bigger, but moreover that stereotypically masculinity denotes 'powerful and large' (1986: 13) (section 2.2). The research naturally followed this thought process, with ideas for using proportion to test perceived masculinity (see sections 2.5, 3.3 and 4.3). Gray and Malins (2004) state that a rigorous process will review and revise methods and methodologies to ensure that they satisfy the needs of the research study. Thus, changes were made to the fieldwork design, and the final two visits to Platt Hall in 2018 were to crosscheck the recording of the details above for accuracy and completeness. The measurement data recorded in phase 2, is therefore not integral to the onward research, but was crucial in the research as a thought process catalyst. The measurement data remained useful for practical technical guidance, for example on cuff and collar sizes (data in appendix B).

*3.2.2.4. Rationale. Pit brow women photography archival research.*

This group of Victorian women defied gender norms at a time when the gendering of clothing, and of men's and women's roles in society was increasingly binary (section 2.3.3). For the practice, the imagery provided examples of how men's clothing can fit

on different women's bodies, and clothing shape and silhouette; additionally, connecting with theories discussing the impact of clothing on gendered bodily gestures (Boulton, 2003; Bugg, 2006; Woodward, 2005) (section 2.4). Observation of this collection and reading the work of Edge (2018), which specifically addresses the Munby collection and the bit brow women, provided further evidence for gendered attitudes in the Victorian era; specifically, how women were judged regarding class and respectability because of their clothing (Edge, 2016 (section 2.3.3)).

3.2.3. Direct observation of Victorian men's shirts and trousers and historical adjustable fit solutions.

Using historical references as a starting point enables the garment designer to identify shapes and ideas and develop them to suit current needs (Seivewright, 2007); the process allows the researcher to examine fabric and construction details to inspire new ideas (Jenkyn-Jones, 2011; Taylor, 1998). Indeed Almond (2013) found that primary research with historical garments enabled clearer understanding of garment construction and of social and cultural connections through linked research. For this study, each artefact was visually recorded using primary sketching in pencil, and by photographs taken on an iPhone; key construction details such as gussets, recurring characteristics (e.g. collars), and adjustment methods were recorded in detail (phase 2). Recording through sketching adds depth to research and enables the designer to find and translate shapes for the onward design work (Seivewright, 2007; Jenkyn-Jones, 2011). For the researcher, sketching was a means of enabling thinking; it enabled shapes and details to be extracted from the object and placed into the design research (practice journal). Files compiled for each artefact, included photographs, sketches, and notes, and the archival record if available (example in appendix A). The files were stored in heavy-duty clear document wallets, in a black portrait archival box. The sketches and photographs were visual inspiration for the design work (sections 4.2, 5, practice journal). Ideas for shape, and methods for creating depth, ease and adjustment were pivotal to the design practice; most importantly the principles of the square cut shirt cut and construction method became integral to the practice method (section 5.2).

#### 3.2.4. Observational analysis of the work wear of Victorian pit brow women.

The research was focused entirely on the A.J. Munby collection; a collection of photographs taken by local photographers of women pit brow workers in Wigan. The photographs were presented as carte-de visite.

Carte-de-visite, originally, a calling card, especially one with a photographic portrait mounted on it. Immensely popular in the mid-19th century...mounted on cards measuring about 4 × 3 inches (10 × 7.6 cm). (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019: online)

The original photographs were presented in twelve leather albums with 6 carte de visite to a page, each photograph could be examined on the front and the back through the cellophane pages (figure 3.2.3). In most cases the back bore the name of the photography studio, one of 6 seen when viewing the collection. Pit brow images had been seen in books and online, however viewing the entire unedited collection as a primary source was valuable. This thoroughly focused examination was carried out in the Wren library, a venue steeped in academic history; the location enhanced the experience, enabling emersion in the process of examinining the historcial artefacts. Each album page and indivdual image was photographed from the front and back using an iPhone. Notes were taken regarding the appearance of the women, such as clothing types and silhouette, props and stance of the women. In order to gain clarity of how the clothing fitted on the women's bodies, the researcher produced a simplified sketch



Figure 3.2.3 –Munby collection album example.



*Figure 3.2.4. Pit brow women sketch.*

(figure 3.2.4). The sketching process created focus and enabled shape and silhouette to be seen more clearly (Jenkyn-Jones, 2011). Images of the pit brow women were incorporated into the design work, and resulting ideas about fit and shape became pivotal to the outcome of the practice (sections 4.2, 5, practice journal).

### 3.2.5. Fieldwork details.

Fieldwork appointments and items to view, were arranged with each curator by email. Dates, locations and details of the fieldwork are detailed in table 3.2.5, with a full list of artefacts being available in the archival resource presented in section 4.2.2.

Venue.	Dates and times.	Collections viewed.	Recording materials.	Recording method.	Handling.
Museum of London, 150 London Wall, Barbican, London, EC2Y 5HN	-16/02/17 -10:30am-12:30pm	Methods of clothing adjustment. Men's waistcoats, bow ties and trousers, 1771 to 1976.	Pencils, paper, tape measure and a phone/camera.	Photographs, sketches and measurements taken (e.g. length, width, waistband and leg cuff) to look for similarities.	The curator handled the items wearing gloves.
The Victorian and Albert Museum, The Clothworkers' Centre, Blythe House, 23 Blythe Rd, Hammersmith, London W14 0HA.	-16/02/17 -2pm-4pm	Victorian men's shirts and trousers.	Pencils, paper, tape measure and a phone/camera.	Photographs, sketches and measurements taken (length, width, cuff and collar depths) to look for similarities.	The curator handled the items wearing gloves.
Manchester Art Gallery, Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester, M14 5LL	03/05/17 10am-2pm	Victorian men's shirts, trousers, bow ties.	Pencils, paper, tape measure and a phone/camera.	Photographs, sketches and measurements taken (length, width, cuff and collar depths) to look for similarities.	Postgraduate readers were granted lone access, and after guidance were permitted to delicately handle the artefacts. This made the process more efficient and enabled greater access.
	21/06/17 10am-2pm	Victorian men's shirts and trousers.			
	19/02/18 -10am-2pm	Second viewing. Victorian men's shirts.	Pencils, paper, and a phone/camera.	Photographs and sketches.	Postgraduate readers were permitted to delicately handle the artefacts as needed, taking them from the boxes and carefully repacking with guidance.
	17/12/18 -10am-2pm	Second viewing. Victorian men's trousers.			
The Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge, CB2 1TJ	1-9/03/18 -11am-1:30pm	The A.J. Munby collection. Carte de visite photographs of women pit brow workers in Wigan, 1866 to 1878.	Pencils, paper, and a phone/camera.	Photographs and notes where made regarding the first impressions of the imagery, this was with a view to further analysis of the collection later.	The collection of leather albums was stored in large wooden crates, each leather-bound album was available as needed and the researcher was permitted to handle them.

Table 3.2.5. Archival fieldwork details.

### 3.3. Photographic pilot study.

This photographic pilot was conceived as a starting point, gaining insights into opinion around key themes of women who wear male gendered clothing for fashion, and socially embedded gender in clothing. The work addresses objectives 1-4 through connections to body image, gender, photography, and identity; it engages directly with how gender is assigned in clothing and why women wear male gendered clothing for fashion. Photography was used as a focus for questions about the gendered perception of men's clothing on a female body, addressing feminine stereotypes such as, long blonde hair, display of skin and the colour pink. To investigate the impact of *clothing on the body*, a comparison was offered by photographing the *clothing off the body*. Data were gathered using online surveys; results analysis is in section 4.3 and the full survey with questions and responses is in appendix A.

Two female models of similar weight and height were used (the researcher and a friend), this ensured that differential of fit would not influence the responses. One model had short, dark hair, the other long, blonde hair. The clothing was from the researcher's wardrobe; this seemed appropriate, with the study rooted in her own experience. Items were purposefully selected, with some designed for male and some for female bodies; outfits were constructed with a mixture of gendered clothing. Each photograph was taken in the exact same location with model's outfits, styling, facial expression and stance aiming to be identical; clothing off the body, was photographed on hangers. The survey used 3 sets of photographs showing clothing on and off the body (example, figure 3.3.1).



Figure 3.3.1. Example of a questionnaire image set. Pink car vest and blue slacks.



167 online questionnaires, were distributed via email to delegates attending a conference at Manchester Metropolitan University, 33 were completed, see table 3.3.2.

To determine the significance level of the results without bias, data were analysed using the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test; results analysis is in section 4.3. This data processing method is used in the interest of removing the opinion of the researcher when isolating notable results, and in this role, it is valuable. The term 'significant' is commonly used alongside this test when discussing the stand-out results. However, it is important to note that although the results show test 'significance', the low number of respondents may not constitute a significant and therefore widely reliable opinion beyond the parameters of this pilot study.

Photographic pilot study online questionnaire. Distribution summary.					
Sent	Viewed	Started	Completed	Drop-outs	Time to complete
167	140	43	33	10	2mins

*Table 3.3.2. Photographic pilot study distribution summary.*

### 3.4. Participant enquiry.

#### 3.4.1. Overview.

When considering fashion as a tool in identity construction, Boulton (2003) finds creativity in the way that 'in today's society we use clothes, and hence fashion, to signify our politics, aesthetic, interests, personal concerns etc.' (2003: 24). When thinking about outfit selection and styling, it was integral to the study to discover what the priorities were for these women, such as issues to do with the body, social expectation, gender presentation, sexuality, modesty, and comfort, both physical and psychological. It was essential, for informing the design practice, to identify the women's approach to gendered clothing, thinking about stereotypes of masculinity and femininity and how, or if, these impacted upon choice motivation. Svendsen and Irons (2006) note that fashion now adheres to a non-seasonal culture of mix and match fashion, and describes this as *pluralism*. Thus, fashion is less prescribed, and style is uniquely crafted by the individual, as described by Boulton (2003) above. This participant enquiry aimed to investigate clothing choice from the women's own perspectives. In-depth investigation was employed to unfurl how each participant *created a self* in their own individual way, by finding out how they interacted with gender in clothing and what their internalised motivations for clothing choice were. The study was designed to provide an in-depth

Details of how objectives are addressed by the participant enquiry methods.		
Objective	Method	Justification
2. To analyse how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources.	Clothing diaries.	Analysing how this group related to gender, using data and imagery.
	Interviews.	
3. To critically analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.	Clothing diaries.	Analysing the choice motivations of the group, using data and imagery.
	Interviews.	
4. To develop a conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image.	Clothing diaries.	Drawing on the participant enquiry findings to reference women's preferences.
	Interviews.	

*Table 3.4.1. Participant methods in relation to the objectives.*

understanding of women's individual clothing choices, through creative and meaningful interpretation of accounts, to build on previous research in choice motivation and drive the development of experimental clothing design concepts.

#### *3.4.1.1. Overview of methods.*

The participant-based enquiry used a mixed-methods process to gather data regarding the choice motivations of women participants, and to use this to inform the practice. A group of ten women was recruited answering a call for women who wear men's clothing (figure 3.4.7 at the end of the section, shows the calling notice). Considering the detailed nature of the enquiry, and as seen in Fern et al. (2012), a purposive sample of ten participants was expected to be sufficient for the study in terms of enabling saturation of themes. When investigating data saturation and sample size, Guest et al. (2006), found that six-twelve interviews should suffice. The participant enquiry mixed method process was tested prior to the main study to ensure suitability of each method for the needs of this research (section 3.4.3).

Detailed information regarding emotion, choice incentives and the lives of the participants, was collated via individual semi structured interviews and utilised information from clothing diary entries kept by each participant prior to the interview (sections 3.4 and 4.3.). The qualitative data informed a conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image, which informed and influenced the practice; see section 6. Table 3.4.1 shows a breakdown of how the participant enquiry methods address the objectives.

#### 3.4.2. Phenomenological position.

An overarching phenomenological epistemological position underpinned this qualitative approach, encouraging an experiential approach, Holloway and Todres (2003), that embraces the diversity of the participants rather than seeking to group them rigidly. 'Our predilection for order can mean that we can too quickly look to fit "things" within our pre-existing categorisation system' (Smith et al. 2009:12). Forming the backbone of these founding theories, Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes how with phenomenology, 'for the first time the philosopher's thinking is sufficiently conscious not to anticipate itself and endow its own results with reified form in the world' (1962: preface xxii). Notably interesting for this clothing-based study, Negrin (2016) endorses the theoretical framework of phenomenology as a method 'with which to address fashion not simply as an aesthetic or symbolic phenomenon but as a haptic experience' (Negrin 2016: 115). The flexibility of interpretative phenomenological analysis meant that the approach would not restrict the depth of usable data. Other approaches such as thematic analysis is similarly flexible, but not grounded in theory. Thus, employing interpretative phenomenological analysis enables the phenomenological overview to extend to the data analysis; this was the epistemological position of the research study. The open thinking of a phenomenological approach, enables the researcher to include data that may not be widely represented, but that is interesting and potentially crucial to the formation of an accurate representation of a participant. Similarly, this participant enquiry demanded a level of in depth investigation, which could not be satisfied by structured quantitative questioning. As part of this phenomenological approach, it was essential for the researcher to listen openly to the women, allowing them to express their accounts freely. Testing of the interview process ensured effectiveness of the method, as detailed below. Focused on the motivations of the women when choosing clothing, the depth of interview questioning needed to facilitate the interviewee in unearthing these triggers, which could be unconscious.

#### 3.4.3. Participant methods pilot.

This pilot was a means of testing the whole participant method, to refine the process (Boulton, 2003), by highlighting necessary changes. The points below show the methods tested.

- Documenting the clothing choices of the participant.
- Interview location
- Audio recording
- Interview process
- Interview questions
- Analysis

The pilot participant (Eva S.) was a member of the researcher's PhD cohort; the woman was asked to participate because she fitted into the group of *women who choose to wear men's clothing for fashion*. Eva S also had experience with qualitative interviews and so was able to offer informal feedback on the process. The interview was not designed to add to the data, but to inform expectations for the main study. Part of this process was to review the pilot interview questions, which were based upon wide reading around the theories stipulated in objective one including, body image, objectification, and identity communication, also gender related fashion theories.

This test procedure was valuable, helping to 'shape and refine' the methods (Wray et al. 2017: 31). As a result, minor changes were made to the process and the interview questions, as summarised in table 3.4.2. The most significant change to the process was amending the method for recording the participants clothing. This was changed from photographs of the participants menswear items, to a diary of outfits worn documented on the body as a *clothing diary* (section 3.4.6); a method used successfully by the researcher in a prior study. Clothing off the body did not show fit or styling, thus the clothing diary offers a wider view of the participants dressing habits.

Participant methods pilot - related changes for the main interviews.		
Method	Detail	Changes
Documenting the clothing choices of the participant.	Photographs of menswear owned by the participant.	Removed and replaced with the clothing diary; a method used successfully by the researcher in a prior study. Clothing off the body did not show fit or styling. The clothing diary offers a wider view of the participants dressing habits.
	Photographs of the participant at the interview.	No changes.
Interview location.	Room in Righton building.	The room was noisy. Changed to a pre-booked room in the Geoffrey Manton (GM) building. Rooms in GM are quiet; pre-booking is necessary, but is also favourable in aiding smooth running of the interviews.
Audio recording.	Using 'sound recorder' on the researcher's laptop.	No changes.
Interview process.	The manner of the interviewer.	The researcher to be less conversational, unless prompting further answers.
	Response of the interviewee.	No changes other than to do with reaction to the questions, see below.
	Length of interview, 80 minutes.	No changes. Long interviews were expected. The quality of the data confirmed to the researcher that the participant be allowed to speak freely and at length as needed.
Interview questions.	The number and the order of the questions.	There were too many questions, making the interview structured. The questions were edited, and prompts replaced full questions where needed. The questions were arranged into research topics, to focus discussion and avoid repetition. The question order was changed to ease the participant into the process.
	The content and the expected response to the questions.	
Analysis.	Coding method. The transcription was colour coded to correspond with predetermined themes.	This method was not compatible with the phenomenological underpinning of the research. A more appropriate method was to read the transcript allowing themes to emerge rather than using predisposed code.

*Table 3.4.2. Changes and observations made during the participant methods pilot.*

Changes made to the interview questions were to avoid topic repetition and to group topics; the question order was appraised to consider the experience of the participant, for example, easy to answer questions about familiar topics were moved to the beginning to ease them into the process. Appendix A contains,

- Interview transcription.
- Interview questions.
- Table of changes made to the interview questions, from pilot to main study.
- List showing changes from the pilot interview questions to the main study.

#### 3.4.4. The participant group for the main study.

Ten women between the ages of 20-52 were recruited from within the staff and student cohort at Manchester Metropolitan University; there was no upper age limit, but a lower age limit of eighteen was set for ethical purposes. The call (figure 3.4.6, end of section) employed a purposive sampling technique and requested women who wear men's clothing for fashion and like to experiment with style to express their identity; this wording aimed to attract women who used menswear in a variety of ways. The call was circulated within departments connected to the study; this was initially via the university email, to the fashion Institute, psychology department and the arts and humanities postgraduate community. To attract further responses the call was printed and posted around campus, primarily in the faculty of arts and humanities, and was posted on the arts and humanities post-graduate website [news.harts.online](http://news.harts.online); it was emailed to course leaders of arts courses, with a request for them to distribute it via email to their students. Two participants were recruited via word of mouth and one was a contact made at a conference; Nine were white British and one Asian British. Due to the distribution of the call all women were staff and students from Manchester Metropolitan University, with seven coming from an arts background, one from sociology, one from social care and social work and one from psychology. Although the researcher did not specifically ask about sexual orientation or gender presentation, three women identified as gay and all identified as women. Table 3.4.3 contains the group information, with the participants represented using pseudonyms.

#### 3.4.5. Anonymity and ethics.

The participant enquiry element of this research relies upon the visual representation of the individuals as well as data from the interviews. It was therefore impossible to adhere to the norm for this kind of qualitative work, which is for anonymity of the participants '...as the mechanism through which privacy and confidentiality are maintained.' (Vainio, 2012: 685). However, in the interest of data protection, pseudonyms were implemented (table 3.4.3) for the interview transcriptions and thesis, therefore participants could be associated with specific responses (Given, 2008). Ethical clearance was obtained for each stage of the process, including information and consent forms for each aspect. Each participant happily provided signed consent to

Pseudonyms	Occupation at time of interview	Age at interview	Ethnicity
Ella	Final year fashion design technology(menswear) student at MMU	22	White British
Keeva	Student of Fine Art at MMU	20	White British
Isabelle	Psychology PGR at MMU	22	White British
Emily	Lecturer in graphic design at MMU and at Sheffield University. Also a practicing artist.	31	White British
Louisa	Lecturer in social work at MMU. Also working externally in social work.	42	White British
Nev	Final year fashion design technology(menswear) student at MMU	21	White British
Noelle	Student of Architecture at MMU	20	British Asian
Haf	Final year interactive arts student at MMU	23	White British
Jessica	Lecturer in criminology at MMU	37	White British
Eva W	Senior lecturer in graphic design at MMU	53	White British

*Table 3.4.3. Participant information.*

proceed with the level of anonymity offered, which was specifically, full use of the interview data and clothing diary imagery within the thesis, for online publication of the thesis and for exhibition related to the thesis. Wiles et al. (2008) argue that the anonymity may not always be necessary or desired by participants within all research types, as cultures and people are increasingly unique, people may want to tell their story. Indeed, Vainio (2012) agrees that anonymity methods should be considered during the research design, making them suited specifically to the research project.

Kelly (2009) talks about a 'duty of care', such that researchers should 'act with integrity' to uphold anonymity when it is promised (2009: 434). The researcher was acutely aware of this responsibility, even more so when participants are not anonymised. It was the intention of the researcher therefore; to seek further consent for use of participant data or imagery beyond the thesis. The thesis, although a public document was likely to be viewed by academics interested in the research outcome, yet an exhibition for example, may be accessible to everyone and is much more public. It was important to acknowledge that not anonymising can build a trust between participant and researcher (Wolfe, 2003 cited in Kelly, 2009); the researcher must not exploit this trust by using the data without due consideration to the participant.

#### 3.4.6. Clothing diaries.

The clothing diary was largely compiled within a closed Facebook group which was a method used successfully by the researcher in a prior study; two participants preferred to email directly. The use of imagery was identified during the pilot, as an effective way to document the women's dress habits. Participants were asked to upload images of outfits with a brief description, denoting men's or womenswear, and what activities their day entailed; this was important in establishing the influence of the situation and occasion on clothing choice. Most of the photographs were *mirror selfies*, a photograph taken by themselves in a mirror, however some women had the picture taken for them; some women had a mixture of both. The requested frequency was daily for a period of approximately two weeks; with the assumption that some would not post daily, the researcher hoped to gather 10-12 images per person. The email sent to the participants regarding the clothing diary is in appendix A. The group created a supportive environment for the participants involved and was an easily accessible data retrieval method. The researcher posted on the Facebook group also; to engage and encourage, and to demonstrate post content. Additional photographs of each participant were taken by the researcher at the interview to record their outfit. All photographs of the participants were used as a prompt to solicit data about how the participants felt about images of themselves (section 3.4.7). The clothing diary method as employed by (Boulton, 2003) which similarly used participant photographs of themselves in clothing, was essential in obtaining a fuller view of the participants' clothing habits. Photographs of participants taken by the researcher as a method to provide an objective view of the self, was successfully used by Grogan et al. (2013); Moody and Sinha (2010) used photography and questioning (questionnaire) to identify relationships between mood and personality factors and clothing style preference. In both of these previous studies, photography was used as a tool to provoke reflective response (Boulton, 2003), enabling the researcher to gather objective views, offering a fuller picture of the participant.

#### 3.4.7. Interviews.

The qualitative method of semi structured interviewing was implemented here. As used by Boulton (2003) and Brownbridge (2012), this method created a 'detailed picture of the respondent's beliefs or feelings' (Boulton 2003:92). Boulton (2003)

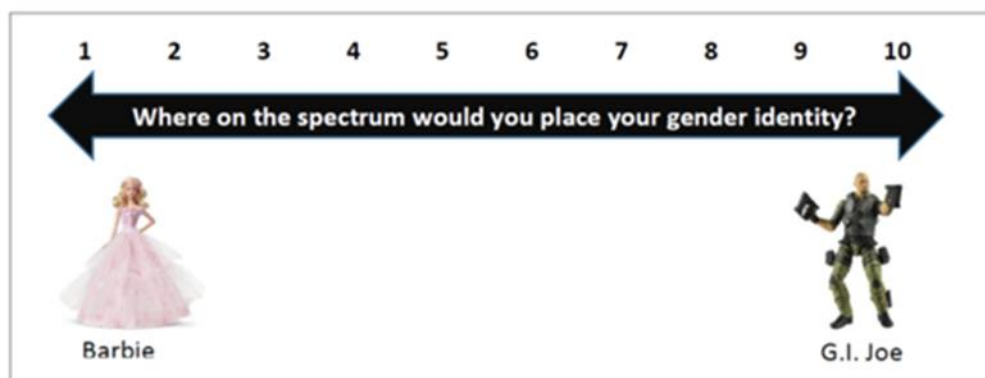


rationalises her choice of a qualitative approach, noting fashion's 'multi-faceted' relationship with body image, and the complexity of individuals' attitudes to fashion, yet sees flaws in the process in that it lacks the control of a structured interview. The method here exploited this flexibility and aimed to produce interviews that were relaxed and conversational, whilst ensuring topic continuity, allowing some direct comparison. The researcher should be aware of over contributing, whilst employing prompting (section 3.4.3), '...to probe for complex information...' (Brownbridge 2012: 66). When planning this study, the questions were structured around emergent topics including body image, masculinity and femininity, personal style and identity. These were identified during the researcher's initial reading, and were tested during the pilot interview (section 3.4.3). It was expected that the interview analysis would expand upon these topics, whilst unearthing new areas of discussion. Research specific to women who choose to wear men's clothing is new, therefore the interview findings would guide the practice phase of the research and instigate further reading. Kawamura (2011) finds that qualitative approach is best if the researcher is examining a new phenomenon and is unsure of the variables.

The planning of interviews was to suit the participants' schedules. The researcher carried out the interviews; she is a 42-year-old female who is a full time post graduate student with The Manchester Fashion Institute. Interviews were conducted in quiet and private pre-booked classrooms; just the interviewer and the participant were present. Interviews were audio recorded on a laptop using 'sound recorder' for a precise record, (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

The interview durations ranged from forty minutes to one and a half hours. Interviews were face-to-face and semi-structured, which is typical of qualitative interview process (Braun and Clarke, 2013). To begin, participants were asked to talk about their clothing diary images (shown one by one on the researcher's laptop) and the outfit they were wearing that day, promoting discussion about clothing choice motivations. The interviewer had a list of topics and questions (see appendix A), however the interviews unfolded organically with the interviewer introducing target topics as suited to conversation flow. Participants were encouraged to speak at length with the interviewer prompting as required. The women were asked to comment on a gender scale (figure

3.4.4.); gauging how the women perceived their own gender identity and providing insights into the connection between gender identity, gender presentation and clothing.



*Figure 3.4.4. - Gender scale graphic used in the interviews.*

Each participant was lastly asked to comment on a series of images from the photographic pilot study (sections 3.3 and 4.3) (figure 3.4.5. shows an example); firstly, regarding the gendered perception of clothing on and off the body, and secondly the comparative femininity of two identically dressed models. These questions were added to gain additional insights into findings from the pilot study, which found that clothing is perceived differently when it is not on a body, and that the blonde-haired model is more feminine. This method of data collection was intended to provoke discussion with the participants. The method differentiates from the self-administered questionnaire in the pilot study, by using a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews. Here it was hoped that face-to-face interviews would incite richer responses.

To finalise the interviews, each participant was debriefed and allowed to ask questions should they wish to.



*Figure 3.4.5. Clothing on and off the body. Pink vest, blue slacks.*

#### 3.4.8. Analysis methodology.

The qualitative method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al. 2009) was the underpinning approach; the pilot showed it to be embedded in a sense of the personal (section 3.4.3) and analysis focused firmly on each individual experience (section 3.4.2). Here was where the analysis became all-consuming for the researcher. Pressure to accurately represent each participant brought a fear of misrepresentation; reporting meaningful aspects of the women's lives, weighed as a heavy responsibility. Details were faithfully recorded as experienced by the participant and without bias (Luft & Overgaard, 2011). It was essential to have a clear view of what phenomenology meant in terms of IPA, and to have this defined in clear terms. This clarity was found in Grbich (2013), who discusses a process of going back, beyond what is personally thought. For this study, this is to strip down the thinking, to where there is no opinion on fit, colour, style, body shape etc.; to see through the eyes of another. To 'prepare to confront the

phenomenon with a blank sheet, rather like taking the position of an alien from a distant planet' (Grbich 2012: 95), thus observation can be with without prejudice, both visually and audibly.

Data collection was rigorous and demanding, yet rewarding and fruitful. Each interview was manually transcribed verbatim by the researcher; the process fostered an invaluable familiarity with each text and individual. All verbal utterances were recorded; thus, transcripts were an honest and full account of the interview without sanitisation. The analysis process was new to the researcher; therefore, it was learned and then adapted to suit the needs of the study. Smith et al. (2009) point out that it is only by following the steps that it is possible to know that IPA is not about sticking to the guidelines, but is a mind-set or a way to see something. This idea of creativity in the analysis was appealing and suited to the practice-based study.

The transcripts were hand noted as the researcher worked more fluidly with hard copy and manually when initial developing links; data were then recorded digitally and sorted into themes. Analysis began slowly and was a learning process, yet the flexible process enabled the researcher to be responsive to the data requirements. Smith et al. (2009) suggest that themes are provisional, and are subject to change as the analysis progresses, which was substantiated with themes mutating and merging, or being removed completely. It was found that initial themes could become simply interesting points to be distributed within themes or the discussion if at all; often these stemmed from the researcher's personal interest, or a precious interesting quote superfluous to the study. The data were rich, and the themes document became large and difficult to navigate; themes were reduced and condensed several times; the development of which can be found in appendix A. Final themes extracted from the data were impactful to the research question and to the accurate description of the participants experience with clothing. Some themes were representative of a large volume of data; however, this was not a prerequisite for selection. The aim of IPA is to represent participants closely; it was therefore essential to document thoughts expressly, if not widely voiced (Larkin et al. 2006). Two supervisors (KB and SG) supported the process of analysis; themes were read and validated as they emerged, to ensure that the recording interpretation was rigorous and accurate. This was done by thoroughly discussing

relevant emerging themes and using the experience of the supervisors, alongside the emersion of the researcher in the study, to place relevance to emerging themes.

A comprehensive profile for each participant can be found in appendix A; providing an overview of the women and offering deeper understanding for the reader. The profile includes for each participant,

- The interview transcript.
- A summary of the participant data regarding for example, clothing preferences, shopping habits, clothing choice motivations.

### 3.5. Summary.

The methods detailed herein aimed to produce useful, workable findings for application to the practice. In accordance with the interdisciplinary nature of this research study it was hoped that a mixed methods approach would incite more exciting and interesting results than simpler methodologies, via a complex combination of data, imagery and creative work.

## Chapter 4. Findings.

### 4.1. Introduction.

Findings from the three different methods of data collection, listed below, are presented in this chapter.

- Archival.
  - Clothing archives, in section 4.2.2 to 4.2.4. Victorian men's shirts and trousers, and historical adjustable fit solutions.
  - Work wear of the Victorian pit brow women, in section 4.2.5.
- Photographic pilot study, in section 4.3.
- Participant enquiry, in section 4.4.

The archival fieldwork findings were found to relate directly to key theories discussed in the literature review; particularly the findings from the exploration of the photographic archive of the pit brow women (section 2.3.3 pp) The pit brow fieldwork has prompted ideas for dressing techniques, and garment manipulation, which can be implemented in the practice. The clothing archival fieldwork identified the Victorian square cut shirt as interesting in terms of construction. It presented design concept ideas, such as the use of proportion, that link to theories of gender and therefore connect theory and practice. Moreover, the clothing archival fieldwork has produced a valuable tabulated resource, which documents the observations made during fieldwork and is presented within these findings (method in section 3.2).

The photographic pilot study was the initial investigation and focused on gendered perception of clothing on and off the body. The initial findings are presented in section 4.3, and 4.4 as part of the participant enquiry (method in section 3.3).

Findings from the participant enquiry provide the basis to this study about women who wear men's clothing and themes generated from the interviews have shaped the practice. They also informed how the archival research was analysed for use within the practice, such as an overarching principle for space within a garment, and coverage of the body (method in section 3.4).

## 4.2. Archival research findings.

### 4.2.1. Overview.

The purpose of the archival research was to provide input for the practice by way of visual stimulation, and construction techniques. Observations from images of the pit brow women that demonstrated how they wore menswear, generated ideas for shape and the manipulation of clothing on the body. Observations from the archival research were implemented in the practice, and connections were made to the literature. Table 4.2.1. shows how the most relevant findings were sorted into areas of interest, for application to the practice. Key themes and subthemes were identified (table 4.2.2) and these were used to structure the documentation of the findings in this section. Technical garment design and construction terms are defined in table 4.2.2.

Findings from the clothing archives fieldwork were systematically sorted and categorised to produce a tabulated data resource, this resource in section 4.2.2.

The sorting of archival fieldwork findings for application to the practice.				
Victorian men's shirts, details in tables 4.2.1 and 4.2.3.				
Victorian square cut shirts, cut and construction.	Scale and proportion.	Gathering.	The impact of storage.	
Victorian men's shirts and trousers, details in tables 4.2.1 to 3.				
Reinforcement.		Gussets.	Pockets.	Mid chest shirt opening.
Binders and shoulder straps.	Layering and density.			
Historical menswear garments, details in table 4.2.4.				
Adjustable fit solutions identified.				
'V' shaped inserts and drawing in with ties.	Metal hardware solutions.		Elasticated sliding adjusters with buttons.	
Pit brow women.				
Loose fit, practicality and function.	Clothing manipulation.	Compensatory femininity.	Bodily response to clothing.	

*Table 4.2.1. Archival fieldwork. The sorting of findings for application to the practice.*

Definitions for terms used within section 4.2	
Term	Definition
Scale.	'The relative size or extent of something' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008:1281)
Proportion.	'A part share or number considered in relation to a whole. The ratio of one thing to another. The correct or pleasing relation of things or between parts of a whole.' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008: 1151)
Gathering.	'(Gather) Draw and hold together (fabric or part of a garment) by running thread through it. (Gathers) a part of a garment that is gathered or drawn in.' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008: 589)
Reinforcement	'Strengthen or support; give added strength to.' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008: 1213)
Gussets	'A piece of material sewn into a garment to strengthen or enlarge a part of it.' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008: 636)
Blind-stitch	A sewing method where stitches are invisible, or almost, on one side.
Compress	'Flatten by pressure; squeeze into less space.' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008: 294).
Haphazard	'Not organized or planned.' (Collins English Dictionary, 2016: 352).
Fall front	A fall front is a trouser fastening, used before the fly front became common. Each side of the waistband would fold in to meet at centre front. A squared off flap of fabric attached to the front of the trouser at lower crotch, lifts up to covers over the crotch area, fastening to buttons on the waistband.
Bib front	A bib front is a section sewn on the front of a shirt at the sides of the button placket. The bib spans the area seen when a jacket is closed, and it can be decorative or of higher quality fabric than the body and sleeves.
Draping	A method for creating garment shapes by draping fabric directly onto a mannequin. The shape can then be translated onto a paper pattern.
Flat pattern cutting	A pattern drafting method working 2-dimensionally with basic blocks (shapes) drafted from standard or individual body measurements. Blocks are manipulated using established methods to create the shape required.
Notions	Small items used in sewing which may be sewn onto or used in the making of an article.

*Table 4.2.2. Technical definitions*

#### 4.2.2. The historical menswear archival resource.

The data was divided into tables corresponding to how it was categorised during the fieldwork and by the archive visited. The categories corresponded with the rationale in section 3.2.2, and are Victorian men's shirts; Victorian men's trousers and adjustment fit solutions in historical menswear. These categories are split into the archive locations at Platt Hall, Manchester, The Victoria and Albert Museum and The Museum of London.



Details of Victorian men's shirts viewed at Platt Hall, between 03/05/17 and 17/12/18						
Accession and date	Style	Detail.	Binders and reinforcement	Gussets	Gathers	Collar and cuff
1947.1399 Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> C.	White tucked embroidered bib. Side/offset full-length opening.		Curved armhole binder. Lined front.	Side vent.	Into back neck & sleeve head.	Soft stand collar & cuff (buttons)
1950.110 1850-70.	White linen squares design bib frill. Voluminous. Half-back opening.		Curved armhole binder. Yoke.	Side vent.	Into back yoke & bottom of bib.	Soft stand collar & Cuff (buttons)
1950.238 Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> C.	<b>Square cut</b> , white, ruffle cuff & collar. Long, wide, voluminous. Half-front open.		Deep binder;rectangular. Reinforced shoulder.	Large side 'v' inserts. Sleeve gussets.	Heavy into neck & cuff. Sleeve head.	Stand collar & cuff w/frill (buttons)
1952.219 C 1860.	<b>Square cut</b> , white linen. Half-front opening. Sharply creased by storage.		Rectangular binders.	Neck, sleeve, side vent.	Into neck at front & back. Sleeves & into cuff.	Soft stand collar & cuff (buttons)
1954.924 Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> C	<b>Square cut</b> , white linen, pin tuck bib. Half-front opening. Embroidered initials.		Deep rectangular binder. Shoulder strap.	Neck, sleeve & side vent.	Heavy into collar at front & back. Sleeve head.	Soft stand collar & cuff (buttons)
1954.1146 1870.	White cotton pleat bib, voluminous Half-front opening. Yoke.		Curved armhole binder.	Side vent.	Sleeve head, into cuff, back yoke. Pleats to bottom of bib.	Soft stand collar & cuff (buttons)
1956.197/6 1885-95.	White cotton stiffened bib, slim fit. Half-front opening. Hanging loop.		Yoke.	Side vent.	One box pleat to CB.	Stiff stand collar & cuff (buttons)
1963.22 1895-8.	White cotton, soft bib front. Half front opening.		Yoke.	Side vent	Into back yoke. One box pleat to bottom of bib.	Soft stand collar & cuff. (buttons)
1973.21/1 1873.	<b>Square cut</b> , slim, white cotton dress shirt. Frills to bib Half-front opening. Hanging loop.		Front/back lined to mid-way. Yoke.	Side vent & sleeve.	Sleeve head & into cuff.	Stiff two-part collar & cuff (buttons)
1973.21/2 1873.	Slim white starched bib dress shirt. Hanging loop.		Yoke.	Side vent.	Box pleat to CB	Stiff stand collar & cuff (cuff link)
1973.21/3 1873.	White dress shirt Embroidered & tucked bib. Half-front opening.		Front/back lined to mid-way. Yoke.	Sleeve & side vent.	Sleeve head & to back yoke. Pleats to bottom of bib.	Stiff stand collar & cuff. (buttons)
1973.21/4 1873.	White dress shirt, frill front & bow tie. Half-front opening. Mix of fine & coarse weave fabric.		Front/back lined to mid-way. Yoke.	Sleeve & side vent.	Into back yoke & sleeve head.	Stiff 2-part collar & round cuff (button)
1985.356 1850-70.	Tucked bib, embroidered. Voluminous. White cotton/linen. Half-back opening.		Curved armhole binder. Deep yoke.	Side vent.	Into back yoke & to bottom of bib.	Soft stand collar & round cuff (buttons)

Table 4.2.3. Details of Victorian men's shirts viewed at Platt Hall, between 03/05/17 and 17/12/18

Details of Victorian men's trousers viewed at Platt Hall, between 03/05/17 and 17/12/18				
Accession and date	Style and detail	Gussets (Squares and triangles)	Other shaped gussets, indents and details	Pockets
1949.2 1841.	Wedding trouser. Stone cloth.	Triangular gusset/seam at crotch either side of CB seam. Uneven triangular seaming at CB seam.	W/b has acute V indent at CB.	Discreet pocket in w/b.
1950.222 1869.	Grey and white stripe cloth.	No gussets.	Multiple stitch lines on exterior at w/b. W/b has a wide sloped V indent at CB.	Side seam.
1951.348 1859.	Navy blue cloth.	No gussets.	W/b has a wide sloped V indent at CB.	No pockets.
1954.888 Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> C.	Fawn cloth.	Small triangular gusset/seam at crotch at either side of CB seam.	Irregular quadrilateral inserts either side of CB below w/b. Wide V indent in w/b at CB.	Discreet pocket in w/b
1955.62 1850-70.	Blue grey cloth. High-rise. Fabric label on w/b 'HJ & D Nicoll' (denoting maker).	Triangular gusset/seam at crotch either side of CB seam.	No further shaped seaming.	No pockets.
1983.620 1840.	White cotton. Fall front. Buttons full length of legs.	Triangle inserts to either side of CB seam.	The legs can open out by unbuttoning the full leg; the shape is unlike a trouser shape.	No pockets.
1986.205 1860-80.	Wool checked.	No gussets.	W/b gently V shaped down to CB seam, deep V indent at CB.	Front.
2005.18 1840.	Dove grey cloth	Triangular gusset/seam at crotch either side of CB seam.	Irregular quadrilateral shaped inserts to each side of CB seam below w/b.	Neat pocket at w/b to side seam.

*Table 4.2.4. Details of Victorian men's trousers viewed at Platt Hall, between 03/05/17 and 17/12/18*

Details of Victorian men's shirts viewed at the V&A, 16/02/17						
Accession and date	Style	Detail.	Binders and reinforcement	Gussets	Gathers	Collar and cuff
T.211 + A1972 1870-79	Shirt and collar, white linen. Front opening.	Stiffened oval bib. Hanging loop.	Yoke (seamed at CB) Bib is double thickness.	Side vent.	Box pleat to CB. Gathers to cuff.	Stand collar w/button holes for detachable collar. Cuff w/ button.
T.343-1980 1900-10	Cotton shirt. White w/blue stripe. Front opening. Long wide.	Embroidery on back neck 'AJ'. Bib has narrow inverted box pleat detail.	Yoke (seamed at CB)	Side vent.	Into yoke & sleeve head. Pleat to either side of bottom of bib.	Stiff two part collar & double cuff, w/cuff link. Button on placket.
T.561-1919 1848	Wedding shirt, cambric. Back opening. Long, wide.	Hand embroidered bib. Fake front opening w/placket & buttons. Back is wider than front when flat.	Yoke shaped down to a point at the back.	Side vent & back opening.	Into cuffs & heavy into back yoke. Pleat to either side of bottom of bib.	Soft stand collar and curved cuffs with button.
Details of Victorian men's trousers viewed at the V&A, 16/02/17						
Accession and date	Style and detail	Gussets and other shaped inserts and details		Waistband	Pockets	Inside and other finishing
T.227-1920 1840	Wool faced with silk	No gussets. Irregular quadrilateral inserts either side of CB below w/b. V indent in w/b at CB.		High at the back. Buttons.	Front have buttons to close at side seam. Small pocket in w/b.	Button holes tabs on each leg hem. Stripe silk trim to w/b, tan cotton pocket bag.
T.394-1985 1840	Wool faced, fall front. Ribbon ties at CB to draw in.	Triangular gusset/seam at crotch either side of CB seam. Irregular quadrilateral inserts either side of CB below w/b. Small V indent in w/b at CB. Deep V insert at CB through w/b.		High at the back to a point at CB.	In w/b. Jetted pockets under fall front.	Detachable heel stirrups on leg hem. Trimmed w/cream silk.
T.469-1,2- 1997-1 1840-89	Trousers w/fall front, wool check.	No gussets. Shape at back created using cut & shaping with steaming.		High at back	Jetted pockets under fall front.	Lined with wool with a deep fluffy pile.
	Matching waistcoat.	No gussets. Neckline creates a soft V shape.		Adjustable back, with sliding buckle.	Two to front lower and one jetted pocket at chest to left.	Lined with stripe silk. Plain silk to back panel.

Table 4.2.5. Details of Victorian men's shirts and trousers viewed at the V&A, 16/02/17

Details of adjustable fit solutions seen in historical menswear at The Museum of London, 16/02/2017.		
Accession (Date) Style	Adjustment purpose	Adjustable fit solutions observed.
A15034b (1771-1799) Breeches with fall front.	To draw in the hem of the leg.	Each leg hem has a self-fabric tab and buckle fastening. The buckle is metal with two sharp prongs.
41.8/2x1 (1781-1790) Breeches with fall front.	To draw in the waist. To draw in the hem of the leg.	V shape indent at the back waist has holes for lacing to adjust the size. Each leg hem has a self-fabric tab with a number of button options for a tighter or looser fit.
80.391/2 (1976) Trousers. Formal.	To draw in the waist.	An elasticated tape runs through a channel on the outside of the waistband. Self-fabric tabs with a button-hole are sewn on the end, these can attach to one of two buttons to draw in the waist.
A7572 (1771-1790) Waistcoat(costume)	To draw in the waist.	Two pairs of fabric strips (self-fabric) span the CB of the waistcoat at the waist and high waist. They are sewn directly onto the waistcoat back, and enabling it to be drawn in.
69.2/2 (1841-50) Waistcoat(costume)	To draw in the waist.	Two fabric bands are sewn into to the back of the waistcoat, one at each side seam. Each has two metal eyelets at the loose end, through which a fabric strip is laced. The loose ends of the bands do not naturally meet, thus the waist is drawn in using the lacing.
85.458/13 (1972-73) Bow tie. Brown.	To fit to the neck.	The fabric bow tie is permanently tied and is attached to a webbing strap. The strap has a sliding adjuster, much like a bag strap, allowing it to fit a range of neck sizes.
85.144/39 (1972-73) Bow tie. Grey	To fit to the neck.	The shaped fabric bow tie narrows to a strap width of 2cm. The strap has a black metal sliding adjuster, much like a bag strap. The inside of the strap has a printed satin tape with the wording 'adjustable to your size' and printed measurements in increments of half an inch; the visible sizes range from 13 ½" to 16", however the strap was drawn in a little.
Details of adjustable fit solutions seen in historical menswear at Platt Hall between 11/07/2017 and 17/12/2018.		
Accession (Date) Style	Adjustment purpose	Adjustable fit solutions observed.
1938.14 (1820) Fall front trouser. White.	To draw in the waist.	A deep V insert divides the waistband at CB, unlike the waistband the insert is of single fabric thickness meaning that it can gather without causing uncomfortable bulk. There are two hand-sewn eyelets through the waistband, one either side of the V insert, through which a fabric strip is laced. The strip can draw in the waist and tie at CB.
1997.212 (1825-30) Fall front trouser. Stripe.	To draw in the waist.	A deep V insert divides the waistband at CB, unlike the waistband the insert is of single fabric thickness meaning that it can gather without causing uncomfortable bulk. There are two hand-sewn eyelets through the waistband, one either side of the V insert, through which a fabric strip is laced. The strip can draw in the waist and tie at CB.

Table 4.2.6. Details of adjustable fit solutions seen in historical menswear at The Museum of London and Platt Hall between 16/02/2017- 17/12/2018

4.2.3. Fieldwork: Findings from direct observation of Victorian men's shirts and trousers. This section focuses on specific observations from the fieldwork and details how they were used to inform the design practice. Detailed observations for each artefact viewed are available in the archival resource (tables 4.2.3 -6).

*4.2.3.1. Victorian men's square cut shirts: observations of cut and construction.*

Fieldwork at Platt Hall included observations of four square cut shirts, which became a focus for the researcher. Shep and Cariou (1999) provided the original drafting and construction methods for these shirts. The process used proportional calculations to draft a series of square and rectangular fabric pieces (figure 4.2.7); these were assembled using a range of garment construction techniques to create a loose-fitting garment. Functional construction, such as methods for reinforcing, seen to be common in menswear (Hopkins, 2011) became a focus for the development of ideas that highlighted construction processes.

Previous studies have noted that garment proportion and scale can be linked to gender (section 2.2 and 5). Kim and Kim (2014) for instance, suggest that current men's and womenswear reflect culturally influenced gendered body ideals, that is, it is right for men to be larger than women. As a garment development method, the square cut process is considered to bridge the gap between flat pattern cutting and draping methods. Kershaw (2013) values both these methods as flat cutting is static and methodical, while draping is more fluid and intuitive.' (2013: 20). The square shirt method begins with the generation of a series of angular shapes, which can then be constructed in a fluid and interpretative manner. This cut and construction process was adapted and an experimental approach that distorted the traditional shirt proportions was developed (Cabrera and Antoine, 2015).

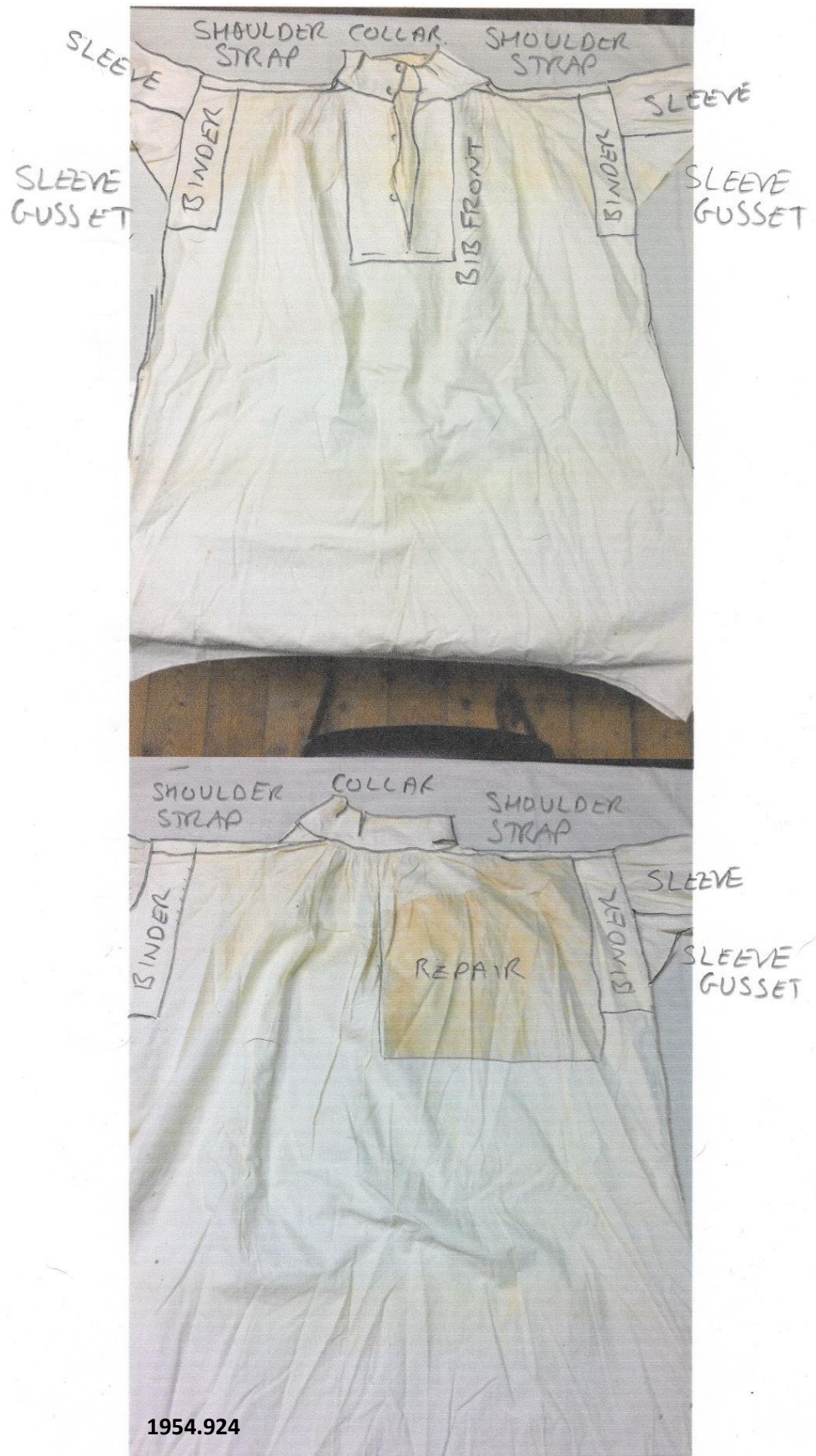


Figure 4.2.7. Square cut shirt construction, Platt Hall.





T.343-1980

*Figure 4.2.8. Long Victorian shirt, widening at the hem, V&A.*

#### 4.2.3.2. *Victorian men's shirts: observation of scale and proportion.*

All the shirts observed in the archives were wide and long, often widening to the hem, see figure 4.2.8. Shep and Cariou (1999) state that the square cut shirts especially 'were long, sometimes down to the knees, and always loose-fitting, with a dropped shoulder seam' (1999: 4). Measurements taken from observation of Victorian shirts from phase one (see section 3.2.2.2 and appendix B) are useful in quantifying the scale and reveal that the maximum flat measurements of a shirt were chest 650mm, Hem 820mm and length 950mm. The square cut shirts were the widest, however all Victorian shirts viewed were found to be bigger than the largest size classic fit men's shirts available on the market now.

#### 4.2.3.3. *Victorian men's shirts: Gathering.*

Gathering is a technique used to draw in a fabric length using a line of stitching. Gathering can be decorative, however in this context gathering was used to reduce the width of a fabric piece to match a corresponding piece (The Readers Digest Association, 1978) such as reducing the width of a neckline situated in the rectangular body panel to fit the collar. The square cut shirts were heavily gathered in places such as the neckline, which added to the voluminous appearance as shown in figure 4.2.9. A voluminous garment that can be worn loose or drawn in with a belt, is likely to be comfortable to wear and versatile. Gathering in square cut shirts appeared to be *haphazard*. Gathering restrains fabric, but allows it to crumple organically; secured only at the stitch line so the voluminous fabric below the gathers can billow out elaborately. In comparison, pleats and tucks sewn flat or folded in straight lines on the straight grain create more uniform results (The Readers Digest Association, 1978), (figure 4.2.10.) As a functional construction element, gathering can be used strategically to create space in specific areas of a garment; The Readers Digest Association (1978) defines 'wearing ease' as the enabling of functional movement and comfort through a garment that does not restrict the body. Here, ease was around the neck and shoulders, enabling movement across the back and in the arms.





1950.238

*Figure 4.2.9. Gathering and volume on a square cut shirt, Platt Hall..*



1954.924

*Figure 4.2.10. Square cut shirt, neck gathering and tucks, Platt Hall.*

#### 4.2.3.4. Victorian men's shirts: The impact of storage.

Artefacts were folded in boxes and stored with tissue paper between each piece. The passage of time and weight of the other artefacts had served to compress the pieces and creasing on some shirts was sharp as shown on the linen shirt in figure 4.2.11. The image shows creases *naturally* occurring on the underarm gusset and around the neckline as a result of storage.

Haphazard creasing as seen here would also occur when the V inserts in the centre back of trousers were drawn in to fit the body (section 4.2.4). The clothing of the pit brow women organically folded and creased to the body, seemingly through the softening of fabric through age and extended wear (section 4.2.5). These findings generated ideas about how to work *with* the characteristics of fabric drape, allow folds and creases to occur organically and these were used to direct subsequent garment development. When combined with established construction and decorative techniques such as gathering, pleats and tucks, the haphazard creases method became a purposeful construction technique; as discussed in sections 3.5 and 4.5.



Figure 4.2.11. Creasing due to storage on sleeve, and shirt front, Platt Hall

#### 4.2.3.5. Reinforcement: Layering and density.

The reinforcement techniques described below in sections 4.2.3.6 and 4.2.3.7, are dependent upon layering of fabric pieces. Layering, folds and seaming are techniques that can create areas in a garment that are quite dense. These areas can be contrasted with parts of the garment made of single layered fabric which are finer (figure 4.2.12). For the practice, fabric was chosen to exploit this effect using various colours, types and weights of fabric. Use of fabric could highlight areas of strengthening, by marking out the construction. This was evident on the decorative bib of dress shirts, where techniques such as tucks and ruffles or stiffening treatments such as starching (Hopkins 2011), affected the structure. See sections 3.5 and 4.5 for further implementation of this finding.



Figure 4.2.12. Density created through construction and decorative layers, Platt Hall.

Tucks, pleats and gathering as decorative and construction techniques were abundantly used in the Victorian shirts. In terms of gender in clothing, these techniques can be related to stereotypes, such as neat, orderly masculine tucks, describing how menswear can be sober and constant emanating 'control' (Craig, 1994: 78), and elaborate feminine gathering as the feminine 'spectacle'. (Craig, 2009: 159) (section 2.2.3). Indeed, gathering is seldom seen on current menswear, and could therefore be characteristic of femininity and womenswear (section 4.4).

#### *4.2.3.6. Reinforcement: Binders and shoulder straps.*

Used in the construction of square cut and early Victorian shirts, the binder is a rectangular piece of fabric sewn inside the garment providing a layer of reinforcement at the armhole and over the shoulder (Shep and Cariou, 1999) (figure 4.2.13). Physical reinforcement through construction connects with security and a feeling of physical and psychological comfort (section 2.4.3). The garment has a functional, utilitarian appearance, suggesting purpose and straightforwardness. Each binder on the Victorian shirts was blind-stitched from the inside. These tiny stitches visible from the outside provided insight into the internal construction of the garment. The shoulder strap is a long narrow rectangular piece of fabric, stitched along the shoulder from collar to armhole; a shoulder strap is approximately 300mm wide, figure 4.2.13 shows an example. Shoulder straps also provided reinforcement, unlike the binder the straps were sewn outside the garment, as an unapologetically functional detail. The researcher found the binder and shoulder straps to be aesthetically engaging details. The relationship between functional and aesthetics is discussed further in section 3.5.

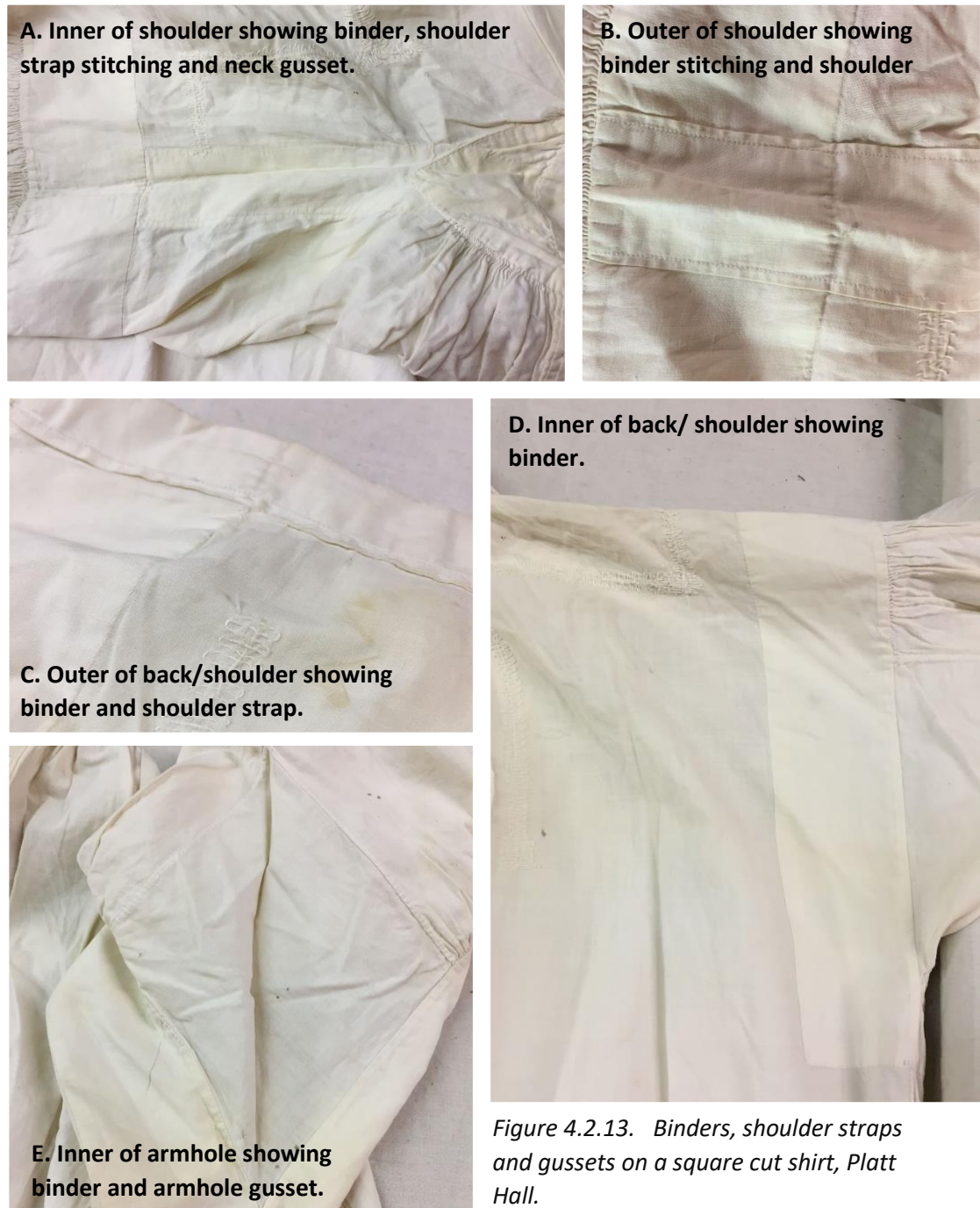
#### *4.2.3.7. Reinforcement. Gussets.*

Gussets reinforce vulnerable areas such as side seams and neckline (Shep and Cariou, 1999); they add shape and create space for movement in areas such as the underarm. Gussets observed here were square, triangular, and irregular quadrilateral shaped. Gussets can additionally be used in the crotch of trousers, providing essential space in this area where movement is the greatest.

The use of gussets was particularly noted in the construction of square cut shirts as seen above in figure 4.2.7. Here large square gussets give space in the underarm, and reinforce the hole cut for the neck as it meets the collar; smaller gussets at the side vent were present in all shirts as seen in figure 4.2.13. In the trousers, triangular two-piece gussets added strength and space at the crotch and the centre back. Variably shaped gussets reinforced and sculpted the fabric into the small of the back, see figure 4.2.13. In the trousers, smaller gussets meant the shaping was subtler than the shirts.

The gusset technique transformed flat shapes by adding depth and volume. A widely used shaping technique for womenswear is the application of darts; darts are tucks in the fabric that graduate down to a point, they fold away the ease and shape a garment to the curves of a female body. Garments with darts tend to be associated with female

body shapes. Gussets are not used to create body shape, but add space between body and garment; and therefore, tend not to be associated with gendered body shape. See sections 3.5 and 4.5 to show how this finding was applied in the practice.





#### 4.2.3.8. Pockets.

Pockets were only placed on the front or the side of the trouser, however some were discreetly placed on the waistband, or were concealed under the fall front. This attention to detail was apparent across the trouser collections, and was said to define men's trousers (Hopkins, 2011). Not all trousers had pockets; many trouser styles were slim, and this silhouette seemed to dictate whether pockets could be included. This is interesting in connection with Matthews (2010) who discussed how women in history were denied pockets, for fear they would impact silhouette; see section 2.2.2. Figure 4.2.14 shows a selection of the pockets viewed.



Figure 4.2.14. A selection of trouser pockets observed at V&A and Platt Hall.

#### 4.2.3.9. Mid chest shirt openings.

All shirts opened to mid chest and fastened with buttons, an average opening was approximately 300mm. Openings were at the base of the bib front, thus the bib dictated the length of the opening; bib measurements are in appendix B. Shep and Cariou, (1999) note that some shirts opened at the back and had a bib front with a fake button opening some had a slit at the front, that was hemmed with only buttons on the collar to hold it closed. Figure 4.2.15 shows a selection of openings that demonstrates the types viewed.



Figure 4.2.15. A selection of shirt openings observed at V&A and MAG.

#### 4.2.4. Historical menswear adjustable fit solutions.

See figure 4.2.16 for examples of all adjustment solutions.

##### 4.2.4.1. V shaped inserts and ties.

Nineteenth century trousers at Platt Hall had 'V' or triangular shaped inserts sewn into the centre back, which divided the waistband and cut into the main body of the garment. The inserts were single fabric thickness, much less dense than the multi-layered waistband. To draw in the back waist, simple self-fabric ties ran through hand-sewn eyelets. The single layer of fabric would yield readily when drawn in, gathering softly without creating uncomfortable bulk. Similarly, eighteenth and nineteenth century waistcoats were drawn in at the small of the back, using fabric ties. Like the trousers, this would crumple the fabric, compressing the excess.

#### *4.2.4.2. Metal hardware solutions.*

Adjustment solutions using metal hardware were common, such as the sliding adjuster on the bow tie in figure 4.2.16, which allows the tie to be adjusted to fit the neck. Solutions such as these suggested a more purposeful and considered method than the simple ties, in the sense that specific suitable hardware was required.

#### *4.2.4.3. Elasticated sliding adjusters with buttons.*

A simple tab and button adjustment, was used in the waistband of 20<sup>th</sup> century trousers at The Museum of London. Hidden elastic through a channel in the back of the waistband attached to self-fabric tabs on each end to fasten to one of two buttons near the side seam to draw the waist in.



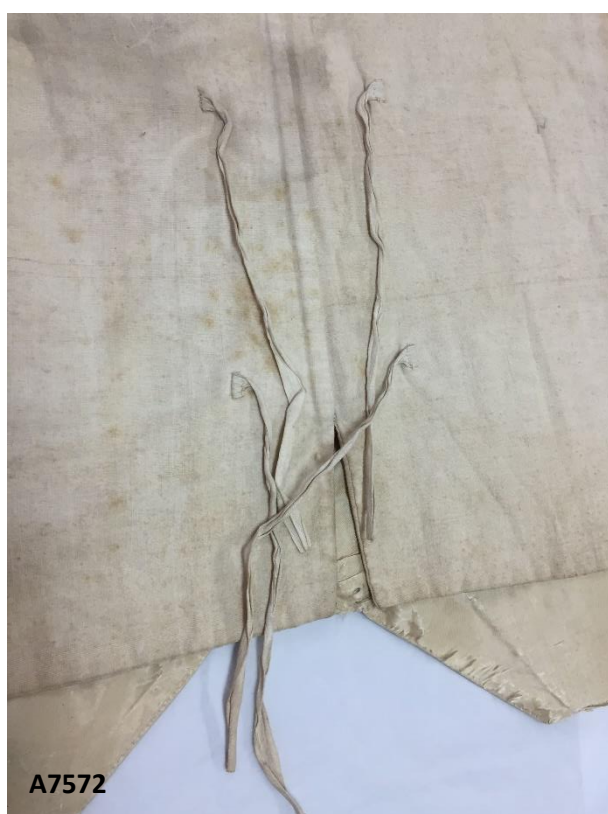


Figure 4.2.16. A selection of clothing adjustment solutions observed at The Museum of London and Platt Hall

#### 4.2.5. Fieldwork: the Victorian women pit brow workers.

The carte de visite documented women dressing practically for work on the pit brow. Figure 4.2.18 is an overview of how the women dressed, the selection communicates similarities in dressing and methods of individual styling; a selection of the recorded images is available in appendix B.

##### 4.2.5.1. Loose fit, practicality and function.

It was observed that the pit brow women adopted a homogeneous loose fit style of men's trousers, a shirt or smock, hitched up skirt, heavy boots and a headscarf. Trousers hung from the hips, and there was plenty of space between the body and garment. The women dressed comfortably and functionally for work, two qualities noted by Malossi (2000) to be valued by men when dressing. As clarified by the sketch in figure 4.2.17, the silhouette skimmed over, crumpled and moulded to the body. Miller and Woodward (2012), suggest that clothing worn frequently can soften to the body, and this is the impression offered in the image of the pit bow women. Worn trouser knees were reinforced with patches sewn on the outside, this method of mending makes parallels to the square cut shirt shoulder strap that is equally unapologetically functional.



Figure 4.2.17. Pit brow women sketch.





Figure 4.2.18. Pit brow women. The Munby Collection.

#### *4.2.5.2. Pit Brow women: Clothing manipulation.*

The dressing method employed by the Pit Brow women involved manipulating menswear so it fitted the body in a suitable and practical manner. Trouser legs and sleeves are rolled and shirt hems tucked in for practicality (figure 4.2.17). Skirts were shortened purposefully by hitching them up, to aid safety around the pit machinery (Edge, 2016); the tops of the legs remained covered, offering a degree of modesty.

The sketching process of tracing over the top of photographs (section 3.2) revealed clear shapes, these were the soft trapezium shape of the rolled under crumpled skirt, which ballooned over the wide cropped trouser legs. The women had wrapped, rolled and adapted the clothing to suit their practical and bodily needs. It is significant that there is no prescribed way for menswear to fit on a woman's body; for the pit brow women, practical usability is more important than fit. This ethos of practicality over fashion or fit offers wider scope for how a garment should or could be worn so the focus shifts from trend led, to purpose led, and trend led body ideals become less important. These methods of adapting clothing and being able to wear a garment in a number of ways, or have it fit a range of body types relates to the adjustable fit exploration above. This is interesting for the practice, when working with a group of women with a range of body types and for practically using clothing; further discussion in sections 2.5 and 4.5.

#### *4.2.5.3. Compensatory femininity.*

In figure 4.2.18, the women's choice to wear a neck decoration in image A, and a tight waistcoat in image C, could read as a demonstration of 'compensatory femininity' (Brownmiller, 1986: 68); this is when feminine touches are added to a masculine outfit. In a similar fashion, the waistcoat in image C formed a shapely silhouette more akin to Victorian womenswear which layered, padded and restricted the wearer (Quinn, 2012), (figure 4.2.21.) Balancing masculine and feminine dress is discussed further in section 2.3.2.



*Figure 4.2.19. Pit brow women in womenswear. The Munby Collection.*

#### *4.2.5.4. Bodily response to clothing.*

‘The mining women had a quite specific working costume that marked them out from other working-class women; they wore working men’s trouser-breeches, often accompanied by a man jacket, and this made them signify masculinity more forcefully than other female trades. It is this that has been caught by the camera.’ (Edge, 2016: 67)

The relaxed posture of the pit brow women in the Munby collection images was evident, and is seen in figures 4.2.17 and 4.2.18 (section 2.3.3). Women in figure 4.2.17 have hands on hips, and sit with legs open using techniques typifying masculinity (Linkman, 1993), and in figure 4.2.18 the women in the sketched image project an air of nonchalance in their relaxed stance. Boulton and Jerrard (2000) suggest that the clothing a person wears and the way in which they present their body, combine to communicate a meaning. It is interesting to consider for the practice therefore, that it is possible that the way a person feels in clothing could influence their bodily movements and thus their presentation of self (sections 2.3-5).

### 4.3 Photographic pilot study.

#### 4.3.1. Overview.

The complete results of the test with significant values highlighted are available in appendix A, along with data and graphs taken from [surveyanalytics.com](https://surveyanalytics.com). The analysis below is centred around the most interesting findings for the purposes of this study, using data extracted from the significant results shown in table 4.3.3 at the end of the section. 'P' refers to the probability of the results being due to chance. A p-value of below 0.05, is considered significant. The numbering 1-5 in table 4.3.3., correlates with pre-set answers 1. strongly agree, 2. disagree, 3. neutral, 4. agree, and 5. strongly agree.

#### 4.3.2. Findings

Statistically, the image considered to be the most feminine was the blonde model in the pink stripe shirt and blue tie (figure 4.3.1) (85.19%, see Q5), followed statistically by the same model in the baggy jeans, white shirt and oversized cardigan image (72.41%, see Q3). In both image sets the body shape is covered and pose and stance are mirrored; the remaining visual indicators were the model's personal features. Long blonde hair was found to be the most feminine, thus it could be concluded that stereotypes have influenced the responses, also considering that blonde is '...more acceptably feminine, than her brunette sisters' (Brownmiller, 1999: 48).



*Figure 4.3.1. Photographic pilot study. Pink stripe shirt and blue tie.*

An interesting comparison to these two results was regarding the femininity of models in the *pink car vest* (figure 4.3.3). Although the result was evenly spread for this image set, it is notable that the pink car vest is flimsy and reveals the body shape and skin (section 2.2.2), therefore it could be suggested that these characteristics have increased the perceived femininity of the short haired brunette model for this image set.

The results of the survey in terms of gendering of clothing on and off the body, demonstrated significantly that the person does embody the clothing. When responding to the statement 'I perceive clothing differently when it is not on a body' (question 11) 72.73% of respondents agreed, this is the most significant result of the survey.



*Figure 4.3.2. Photographic pilot study. Pink car vest and blue slacks.*



Question 1. Which image appears the most feminine to you?				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1–brown	14	46.67%	0.04	0.8415
2 – blonde	16	53.33%		
Question 3. Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1 -brown	8	27.59%	4.96	0.0259
2 - blonde	12	72.41%		
Question 5. Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1 -brown	4	14.81%	12	0.0005
2 - blonde	23	85.19%		
Question 7. The clothing looks different on each model.				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	4	12.12%	29.886.6	0.001
2	5	15.15%		
3	3	9.09%		
4	19	57.58%		
5	2	6.06%		
Question 8. It is easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for.				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	1	3.03%	27.15	0.001
2	17	51.52%		
3	9	27.27%		
4	5	15.15%		
5	1	3.03%		
Question 9. The models look better in clothing which I think is designed for their body shape.				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	2	6.06%	13.82	0.0079
2	6	18.18%		
3	11	33.33%		
4	12	36.36%		
5	2	6.06%		
Question 10. It is easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for when it is not on a body.				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	2	6.06%	18.97	0.0008
2	15	45.45%		
3	8	24.24%		
4	7	21.21%		
5	1	3.03%		
Question 11. I perceive the clothing differently when it is not on a body.				
Category	Observed Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	0	0%	59.58	0.0001
2	3	9.09%		
3	5	15.15%		
4	24	72.73%		
5	1	3.03%		

Table 4.3.3. Photographic pilot study. Chi-square survey results analysis.



#### 4.4. Participant Enquiry.

##### 4.4.1. Overview.

This participant enquiry probed the clothing selection motivations of a group of women answering a call for ‘women who wear men’s clothing for fashion’. The enquiry addresses the aims as shown in table 4.4.1, and was conducted using the methods detailed in section 3.4. The results provided the foundational data for how gender is assigned in current sources (2), and informed topics for the critical analysis of why women choose to wear gendered clothing (3) (section 2). The data was used to inform the practice (section 5), and contribute to the development of a conceptual model of women preferences in relation to clothing gender and body image (5) (section 6).

Details of how objectives are addressed by the participant enquiry.		
Objective	Method	Justification
2. To analyse how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources.	Clothing diaries.	Analysing how this group related to gender, using data and imagery.
	Interviews.	
3. To critically analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.	Clothing diaries.	Informing themes for critical analysis of current literature.
	Interviews.	
4. To develop a conceptual model of women’s preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image.	Clothing diaries.	Drawing on the participant enquiry findings to reference women’s preferences.
	Interviews.	

*Table 4.4.1. Participant methods in relation to the objectives.*

Nine themes were identified in total. Figure 4.4.2 shows them listed in order of relevance with sub themes where required. Quotes are presented verbatim and pseudonyms are used to identify the participants.

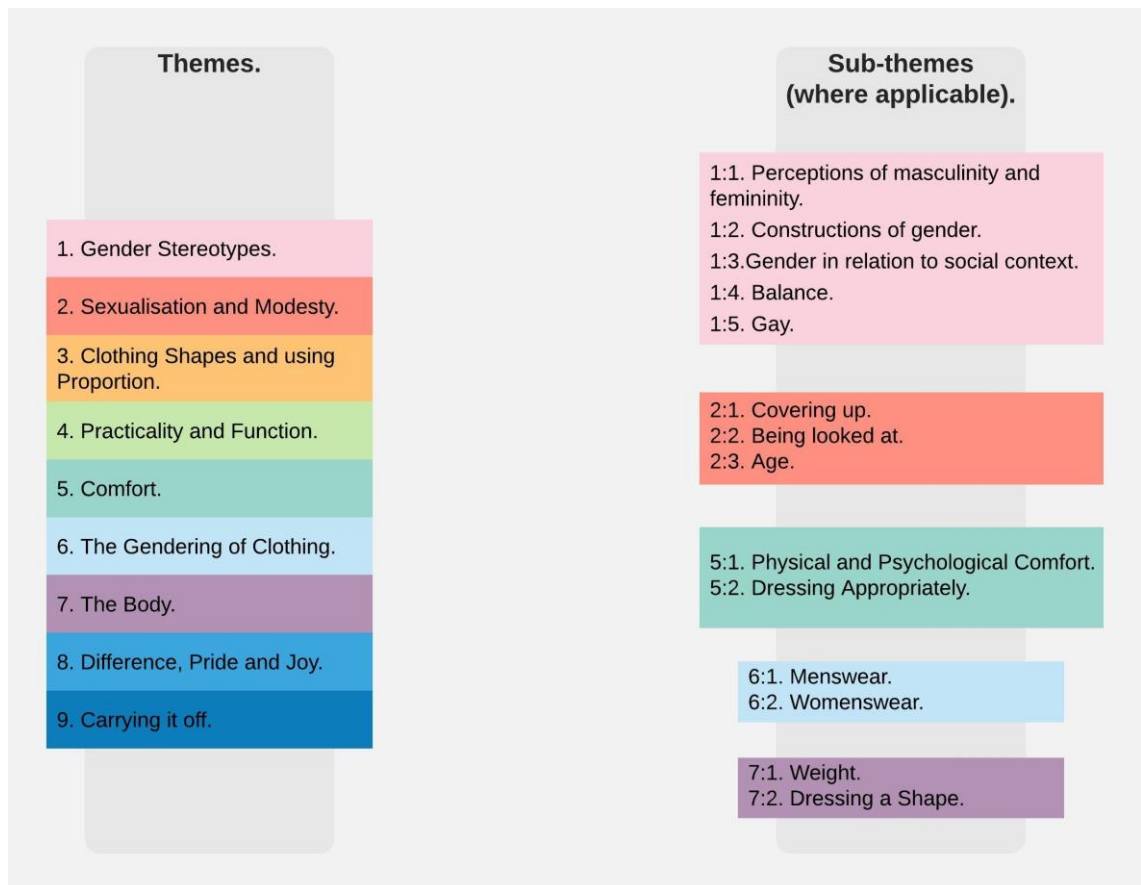


Figure 4.4.2. Model of themes generated from the participant interview analysis.

#### 4.4.2. Results.

##### 4.4.2.1. Theme 1. Gender Stereotypes.

*‘Yeah, my Mum when I was born, she knew I was going to be a girl so she had 20 dresses all ready for me when I was born. As soon as I could pick my own clothes I was in jeans and t-shirt.’ (LOUISA).*

The quote from Louisa above indicates how gender can be constructed through clothing at birth. It then goes on to explore how clothing is used for gender presentation, and how this may associate with masculine and feminine. The participants saw gender as a spectrum rather than a binary. Within this gender spectrum, there were infinite individual constructions of gender. This theme initially addresses how each woman responded to the stereotypical norms of masculinity and femininity.

### Sub-theme 1.1. Perceptions of masculinity and femininity.

*'Power...strength...authoritarian' (LOUISA)*

Words used by Louisa above and a somewhat tongue in cheek 'Yeah like strong, powerful, serious erm... (Laughs)' (KEEVA), were typical of the ways in which the women described masculinity. EMILY finds that she can be '...more business-like' and gain confidence in new situations by heightening the masculinity of her outfit. NOELLE pictures masculinity in the background, 'practical' and '...just feels a lot more like straight forward I guess you could say.' (NOELLE), implying calm or steady.

A resistance to the feminine and feminine clothing types was apparent; this was demonstrated by all participants, in some way. For example, NEV recalls 'I had a denim dress on, but it wasn't erm, it was just a boxy square thing' (NEV); playing down the dress by describing it as 'boxy square thing'. Similarly, commenting on the perceived femininity of the pilot study models, feminine stereotypes were expressed with humour or sarcastic tone (ISABELLE, NEV, KEEVA), such as for the blonde model, '...it's the first thing that popped into my head, but like big boobs and long hair.' (Laughs) (ISABELLE).

Describing herself as feminist, LOUISA explained how she could appreciate femininity in other women, but finds it to be '...a weakness sometimes' because of '...how femininity and masculinity are portrayed' (LOUISA). This feminist attitude to cultural expectations of femininity, may explain why to some extent, all 10 women are reluctant to appear to be feminine or to demonstrate femininity.

In contrast to the majority of the group, NOELLE makes some positive comments about femininity in clothing, for example 'Just wanting to feel pretty to feel you know, elegant and nice in summer' (NOELLE).

### Sub-theme 1.2. Constructions of gender.

*'[if] I wear a skirt, [I feel] a bit more out of place! [Compared to trousers]'* (HAF).

Gender construction through clothing, as for HAF, is associated here with feeling psychologically comfortable, such as '...feels too girly and feminine which isn't really how I see myself' (LOUISA), and 'like the frilly sleeves? I don't think that would suit me.

(Makes face)' (KEEVA). NEV notes that the loose fit, menswear influenced clothing in which she feels psychologically comfortable and suits her, can single her out when going out with her friends.

'I think sometimes I feel a bit odd if I'm with all my friends and everyone is like really like stunning and quite girly and I'm the odd one out that looks like a boy at the end' (NEV).

The participants demonstrated mixed affiliations with binaries of femininity and masculinity. These were difficult for them to relate to when describing themselves or other people (ELLA, KEEVA, EMILY, ISABELLE, NEV). When asked to respond directly to how she felt about masculinity and femininity EVA W. found that

'I think I'm finding the questions difficult because I don't see myself as masculine or feminine or either way. I feel like I'm a woman and I'll wear the things that suit me best' (EVA W.).

This was the case for all the participants to some extent. JESSICA's comments below typify the majority feeling of the group (as above),

'So the stereotypes of like masculinity, being about bravery, and strength and being detached and having no emotion. I think that's the stereotype, but I don't think that's the, you know, that's not the embodiment of it I see of having any meaning to me...And the same with feminine, so feminine being kind of erm, emotional, maternal, being dainty, being you know kind of small. I think that's the stereotype, but ... it's not something that has kind of meaning to me in terms of what is masculine and feminine' (JESSICA)

Sub-theme 1.2. Gender in relation to social context.

*'It's the bubble you happen to inhabit' (EVA W.).*

Social expectations of gender stereotypes were seen to be influenced by specific social groups and habitat (above).

Perceptions of masculine and feminine are thought to be '...about demographics...' (EVA W.), to the extent that for EVA W. masculinity is not a feature in her arts-based life. EVA W., ISABELLE, ELLA, and NEV work or study in the arts at Manchester Metropolitan University, where EVA W. finds that for some '...there's an arts look...' (EVA W.). The

look is utility and workwear based, often unisex in style and is largely monochromatic. EMILY explains how when starting her job at the art school her clothing ‘...went really minimal and quite boxy...’ (EMILY).

### Sub-theme 1.3. Balance.

*‘Yeah, I think the ideal is to have that balance of like typically feminine and masculine’ (ELLA).*

The participants used clothing to achieve a balance of masculinity and femininity and this was used to communicate identity. NOELLE for example off-sets feminine items, ‘like bottom half feminine, like loose trousers or a skirt with the top half like a man’s t-shirt or a jumper...’ (NOELLE). In a similar vein EMILY expresses how she uses ‘clumpy shoes’ to balance out her outfit, ‘like not physically balanced but like my outfit feels more balanced’ (EMILY).

All participants expressed balance as fluid, influenced by mood or social environment. KEEVA enjoys the way in which she can use clothing flexibly to communicate her gendered identity, such as ‘if I’m feeling a bit fancy I’ll put on like a girl’s!’ (KEEVA). EVA W. discussed this balance with relation to calibrating ‘sexuality...presence...confidence...’, she says,

*‘As a woman...I want to be judged as EVA W. who is creative or who has something to say or can be funny or can be animated or talks with her hands or rides a bicycle or is able to move through this city with confidence. I would hate to feel stifled in the city centre because the clothing I was wearing pre-judged me.’ (EVA W.)*

### Sub-theme 1.4. Gay.

*‘For some reason I was scared to wear this shirt in particular [as a teenager]! (Laughs) I dunno I thought it was super gay or something! (Laughs)’ (KEEVA).*

The three women who identified as gay, all connected their clothing choices to being gay as for KEEVA above. HAF found that,

‘I like identify as like a lesbian so I guess I do to a certain extent fit that certain stereotype of having like short hair, baggy clothes and stuff like that’ (HAF).

All three women dressed in a unfeminine style, acknowledged to be stereotypically lesbian. For KEEVA the stereotype was a way of fitting in, she remembers that,

‘I think when I first realised I was gay, like you know when you’re just like trying to find yourself and sort of fit into a category and whatever and you obviously change how you dress’ (KEEVA).

KEEVA and HAF occasionally wore womenswear to suit mood and occasion, however Louisa dressed only in men’s clothing from head to toe as a man would.

Although not gay herself, NEV explained how her clothing meant people wrongly assumed that she was gay and ‘they were like just the way you dress and how you act...’ (NEV).

#### *4.4.2.2. Theme 2. Sexualisation of the body and modesty.*

*‘I think I feel a bit more vulnerable in a dress ...Your legs are out...like it’s hard to access your underneath body in trousers and you’re all done up and things!’ (EMILY).*

Issues with sexualisation of the body were evident within the data, and as for EMILY are frequently associated with revealing and sexuality.

#### *Sub-theme 2.1. Covering up.*

*‘Erm, yeah I just don’t want to put that [her body] on display sometimes’ (ISABELLE).*

ISABELLE (above) reflects the feelings of the group for coverage; frequently expressed as ‘covering up’ (JESSICA). As a Muslim woman, NOELLE aimed to dress modestly, by not showing her body shape, using men’s t-shirts, hoodies and jackets to help achieve this.

‘...when you tuck like a t-shirt into a skirt it kind of accentuates your waist a bit. So I guess sometimes you would throw on just like a shirt or something or a jacket to cover up’ (NOELLE).

When commenting on the femininity of the models (table 4.4.3, page) ISABELLE notes that menswear or bigger clothing that conceals the body ‘takes away that

femininity...signs of femininity or signs of being female' (ISABELLE). A range of dressing techniques, used by all women were mentioned. When wearing a strappy summer dress ELLA notes that,

'I had to wear a t-shirt underneath it because I don't like the dress on its own...because without the t-shirt it then feels too feminine, because my whole like this area [upper body] is out, my arms are out' (ELLA).

Some womenswear, as with ELLA's dress, is seen to sexualise the body by showing skin. When asked about showing skin, NOELLE said that,

'When I'm shopping as someone who is trying to avoid that I notice it a lot. Things like skinny jeans, crop tops, these kinds of things...' (NOELLE).

Daywear that sexualises the body, such as figure hugging was especially avoided. ISABELLE wears casualwear that '...goes straight down...' (ISABELLE), and for EVA W. 'it skims yeah, there's nothing hugging. There's no stretch fabrics, there's no jersey...' (EVA W.).

For work, EMILY wears 'things that conceal my figure a bit more... (EMILY), For EMILY showing her body shape at work is linked to feelings of psychological discomfort. It is implied by EMILY that her feminine female body is not appropriate for her work environment.

Other body regions linked to sexualisation were identified as the cleavage (JESSICA, EVA W.) and waist (NEV, NOELLE, ELLA,). JESSICA describes how she uses the volume of her oversized shirt to balance out the low neck of her t-shirt.

'I suppose it's about feeling comfortable, because obviously that's quite low [indicates neckline of T-shirt] and, but I wouldn't take this off' (JESSICA).

Sub-theme 2.2. Being looked at.

*'If I am like a little bit, like wearing a fitted top or something like that, it has to be where I'm like I can deal with that today I'm ok with people looking'. (HAF)*

HAF admits that she limits her clothing choice due to awareness of being looked at (HAF, JESSICA, EVA W., EMILY, NOELLE, NEV, ELLA, ISABELLE). JESSICA describes how wearing

revealing clothing means that she unable '...to relax and just being able to kind of, not feel like all of my skin is on show or that people are looking at me' (JESSICA). HAF wears a lot of bright colours and even when 'fully clothed' she finds that,

'...because of the colours people still look so sometimes I do need to brace myself to be able to deal with people kind of constantly looking' (HAF).

In contrast, LOUISA uses dark colours to detract attention from her body, 'I think because I'm a bigger girl, err, quite shy, so I don't want to draw too big attention to myself with bright colours' (LOUISA). HAF and JESSICA pointedly indicate 'people' and not Eva specifically 'men' as the observers.

'I remember thinking when I was going on a night out, I'm dressing for the judgement of other women; men don't care what I wear' (JESSICA).

The idea of women observing women may be sexual or with a judgemental or competitive eye. EVA W. found as a younger woman that she,

'...felt like there was always this sort of comparison going on. The relief maybe is that you don't feel that [when older], I don't feel I have to go oh! She's thinner than me! Or she's looking prettier than me!' (EVA W.).

EVA W. and JESSICA here emphasise this idea of constant appraisal of one's ability to perform as female.

### Sub-theme 2.3. Age and sexuality

*'you know I'm fifty-three and I do associate a release of not feeling, I think you dress for your own self and your own attraction and your own sort of definition of yourself....'* (EVA W.)

For two women age was an influencer (EVA W., EMILY). As the oldest woman in the group EVA W. found changes in her body had influenced her clothing choices, she would '...wear something that's very loud and very noticeable...' (EVA W.) but will take into account coverage of '...varicose veins...the cleavage...the tops of my arms' (EVA W.). She notes that '...in my thirties and early forties I would go out in something that was a bit more revealing...' (EVA W.), now she wears 'androgynous' (EVA W.) clothing, which she feels is a reflection of her feelings 'feel hampered' by sexuality as an older woman. EVA



W. also attributes breast surgery for cancer as a contributing factor, for her less sexualised style. She explains how ‘...it’s certainly made me feel comfier when I’m wearing buttoned up things...I’m not aware of that cleavage importance’ (EVA W.). The decreased pressure to feel sexual is key to EVA W.’s modest, androgynous style.

At 31 EMILY, the fourth oldest woman in the group, had also begun to think about age appropriate clothing. ‘I mean not that I’m saying people can’t wear crop tops at any age, but I think I sort of became conscious of it...’ (EMILY).

#### *4.4.2.3. Theme 3. Clothing shapes and using proportion.*

*‘I quite like looking at shapes you create that go in connection with your body shape.’*  
(EVA W.)

This theme relates to the use of big clothing, and the use of boxy shaped clothing to make interesting connections (EVA W. above) with the body, or to play with proportion against the body shape.

ELLA explains that ‘I just really like the play on having a smaller frame and wearing boxier items’ (ELLA). Baggy, loose, wide and massive are words used by all participants to describe their clothing. The participants bought larger sizes (EVA W., EMILY, JESSICA, NOELLE, ISABELLE, KEEVA, NEV, ELLA), often noting this voluminous aesthetic as a reason for choosing menswear (JESSICA, NOELLE, ELLA, NEV, KEEVA, EVA W., EMILY, ISABELLE).

‘Yeah, sometimes I like wearing oversized stuff just because it’s comfy and I dunno I feel like you can make it look good’ (KEEVA).

Some participants (3) talked about contrasting baggy shapes, with slim or fitted shapes, to create an interesting proportional aesthetic, ‘I always like the proportion of it’ (NEV). ELLA elaborates,

‘It’s like wearing work jackets that aren’t shapely, but then having trousers like this that cinch me in a bit. I like having a bit of a contrast going on when I wear clothing’ (ELLA).

#### 4.4.2.4. Theme 4. Practicality and function.

*'You're saying dress like, be like this, be confident. Don't be interfered with by having to adjust your tights or I don't know, make sure that your dress is ironed! (Laughs) I don't know maybe I want a practicality for women' (EVA W.).*

Practicality and function were found to be desirable characteristics for everyday dressing by all participants in some way. They found these qualities in men's or masculine styled clothing. For JESSICA, this clothing allowed her '...to be able to get on with my daily life. I don't think female clothes suit my lifestyle' (JESSICA), she uses humour to illustrate her point.

'erm, it doesn't, suit my daily needs of running around, walking into work, then my tights falling down! You know like (Laughs) the gusset being around my knees! (Laughs) (JESSICA).

'Trousers' (EMILY) and 'pockets' (ELLA) were both cited as functional items; 'bows' (JESSICA) and 'anything flouncy' (MH) were non-functional and disliked.

Fashion students studying menswear, NEV and ELLA offered more in-depth insights about design characteristics of menswear. For example NEV notes a shirt with, 'a little hanging loop?...they don't think women need stuff like that! (Laughs)' (NEV). Also referencing good design, ELLA notes that details such as a trouser back pocket and side adjusters are typical of menswear, stating that '...in men's there's always going to be pockets in everything' (ELLA). ELLA, KEEVA, ISABELLE, NEV and EVA W. identified usable pockets as a desirable and practical feature found in menswear. ISABELLE says, '...you don't have to worry about like leaving things around' (ISABELLE). Pockets gave a women's garment 'functionality' (ELLA) and ELLA says of skirts and dresses with pockets that, 'it's a more considered garment... you just feel a bit more... you've got your shit together kind of thing' (ELLA). EVA W. notes the benefit of simplistic styling combined with pockets, with reference to her, 'Cos pinafore dress which is terribly basic with two big pockets and I really love it...' (EVA W.).

Simply designed practical womenswear is popular with ELLA, NEV, NOELLE, ISABELLE, EMILY, JESSICA, EVA W., '...when I'm wearing women's clothes I think they're quite plain in a way?... like nothing added to it' (ISABELLE). EVA W. finds that,

‘The emergence of shirtdresses I think is really interesting ... so being able to wear a dress but you’ve actually, you’ve got something that is simplistic and is purposeful’ (EVA W.).

Workwear is worn by NEV, EVA W., EMILY, ELLA and is found to be functional and ‘...there’s a practicality to it’ (EVA W.).

Skirts are considered problematic in terms of wear (JESSICA, HAF, NOELLE, EVA W., ELLA, EMILY) because ‘...you know, skirt rides up skirt falls down’ (JESSICA). NOELLE, JESSICA, and EMILY specifically note the impracticality of skirts and dresses in a working environment, and NOELLE states that, ‘... when you’re in studio it’s a bit impractical’ and ‘...a bit difficult to navigate’ (NOELLE). Trousers were seen as functional and worn more than skirts and dresses by all the women.

#### *4.4.2.5. Theme 5. Comfort.*

*‘...it’s not even a conscious thing; it’s just how I feel comfortable’ (LOUISA).*

Clothing which offers comfort, both in terms of physical and psychological comfort (LOUISA above) is shown to be essential for this whole group of women.

#### *Sub-theme 5.1. Physical and psychological comfort.*

Physical comfort is important to all participants and they find this in loose fit clothing. KEEVA says she feels ‘trapped inside’ if she wears a jacket to fit her body, and that wearing larger sized clothing brings physical comfort,

‘Just if I feel comfy. I don’t wear clothes that that should fit me that often that are actually my size. I don’t really know what size I am’ (KEEVA).

JESSICA finds the comfort of loose clothing allows her body to be ‘...free ...’ and physical freedom is achieved for JESSICA and HAF by not wearing a bra. EMILY finds freedom when she feels ‘...more sexy or something in a [loose fit] trouser suit...’, the ability to move and ‘...dance better...’ enables her to feel this way.

Often comfort can be both physical and psychological, for example JESSICA’s clothing choices are ‘...to do with being comfortable [physical] and covering up [psychological]’ (JESSICA). ELLA, KEEVA, NEV, NOELLE, JESSICA, and, stated a love for sleeves that were

too long. 'I think girls like it when things go over their hands...it's just like a comfort thing' (NOELLE). NEV feels physical and psychological discomfort in tight clothing around her waist.

'I still don't like things tight around my stomach, because that's still not, like I don't feel that comfortable about that' (NEV).

Psychological discomfort is felt when tight clothing reminds the wearer that they feel overweight; EVA W. and JESSICA shared this feeling.

Sub-theme 5.2. Dressing appropriately, occasion, people, and performance.

*'I think it's me feeling right in the right environment, because I just wouldn't feel comfortable wearing something like this [oversized plaid shirt, t-shirt and jeans] to like an important meeting' (ISABELLE).*

Dressing appropriately can be subjective; however, what is perceived as appropriate (ISABELLE above) is important to this group of women and influences psychological comfort.

MH conforms to cultural norms of men's dressing and states she wears suits '... for big meetings...just to show you're giving it the gravitas it deserves really' (LOUISA).

Some participants (ELLA, EMILY, ISABELLE, KEEVA, JESSICA) deemed feminine women's clothing appropriate when going out or not at work. This group appear to feel that women's clothing provides more scope for fun and is less formal, more colourful and more revealing. ISABELLE is more confident when going out and would wear a revealing women's top, she says. 'I'm just there like yeah, I don't really mind! I can show a bit of midriff and wear a tight-fitting top! (Laughs)'.

Weddings are seen by the group as an occasion for careful clothing selection and for some (ELLA, ISABELLE) an opportunity to 'dress up', Eva spending time planning an outfit. ELLA enjoys the dressing differently, saying that a wedding is 'like a free pass that for the day...', where she can '...look really pretty...' or '...put on a suit...' (ELLA). EVA W., NEV and will just adjust their dress to partially conform, whilst maintaining their own individual style.

'And I think I find it odd when you go to weddings and you're meant to wear suddenly this sort of aged costume...I go to weddings in Birkenstocks and Marimekko and people go oh my god you've come like this!' (EVA W.).

#### 4.4.2.6. Theme 6. The gendering of clothing.

*'...I think men's is more about what feels right for you and I think just the shapes are a lot cooler than womenswear' (ELLA).*

This theme details how the participants gender clothing by identifying characteristics and by how they feel to wear (ELLA above).

##### Sub-theme 6.1. Menswear.

*'it's not got any kind of like weird seams in weird places to like make it fit round your boob or your kind of thighs or something, it's kind of like loose and square. (Laughing)' (ISABELLE).*

Menswear was seen as simple, and uncomplicated, and not clinging to the body (ISABELLE). The language is simple and clear, 'I just like the straight down and t-shirt underneath it and it's just like flowing away...' (HAF), and '...things that are plain and simple' (JESSICA). Summarised by ISABELLE, '... it's all a bit more stripped back in a way' (ISABELLE).

Nine of the women like men's or oversized shirts for the simple shape and roomy fit. Collars are identified as a characteristic of menswear and are specified as '...a sturdy collar' (LOUISA). EMILY comments that '... it's the cuffs on them...like those bits look a bit chunky (Laughs) and maybe the collar' (EMILY). Similarly, JESSICA prefers '...chunky [men's] jumpers' (JESSICA) and in the description of fabrics associated with menswear, which are described as '...sturdier' by ELLA. Fabrics noted are, 'drills, twills, wools...denim' (ELLA). Also cotton and denim (JESSICA, NEV).

MH and KEEVA noted that patterns and colours of menswear differ from those used for womenswear, and both prefer the menswear offer. As a younger consumer KEEVA, shopping in Topman, has encountered an influx of non-traditional pastel shades, which

she does not like, saying that, 'I'll wear it sometimes but not as much I prefer like quite solid colours' (KEEVA).

As women who prefer men's or masculine clothing, the colour preference of the group follows suit and universally black and white are popular, with most wearing navy (6) and denim (9). Bright colour is worn as an accent for EMILY, JESSICA, ELLA, EVA W., and NEV. NOELLE, KEEVA, ISABELLE and LOUISA are only seen wearing monochrome and muted shades, such as navy, bottle green, khaki green, grey, brown and tan; HAF wears a mixture of bright colours.

#### Sub-theme 6.2. Womenswear.

*'I just I don't want the restraint of something that's close fitting and overly sort of feminine' (EVA W.).*

All participants identified tightness and fitted as two of the main characteristics of womenswear (EVA W. above). JESSICA said,

'I think that can look really frumpy on somebody like me, like a t-shirt that's fitted like that, or a shirt that's fitted. I think it looks frumpy, I think it looks middle aged...'  
(JESSICA).

EMILY agrees finding that they (t-shirts) need to be '...longer... looser ...higher neckline' (EMILY). HAF finds that the fitted cut of women's shirts does not provide the loose fit she prefers. For HAF, the fitted shape requires the garment to be worn close to the body.

'It's almost as though to look right on a body it needs to be really really fitted otherwise it's going to be like your body's not there properly' (HAF).

Revealing skin is regarded as feminine and sexualising by the group (sexualisation of the body and modesty), this is reflected in clothing characteristics. Commenting on the pilot study photographs, EVA W. and EMILY were able to identify a women's top by the neckline, '...because of the depth of the scoop' (EVA W.). Of other womenswear ELLA said,

‘crop tops I think are really feminine, just because again it tends to show off your middle area ... I think it’s to accentuate that bit. Erm, shorter skirts as well I feel are typically quite feminine, I think again because showing your legs and stuff’ (ELLA).

Frivolity in womenswear was identified in some way by each member of the group. JESSICA details ‘...high fluffy collars...’ as a womenswear characteristic that she could not wear, whilst ELLA spoke of softer women’s collars,

‘...it’s almost to make your neck appear more delicate and feminine, whereas I think men’s clothing has that harshness to it’ (ELLA).

Overtly feminine women’s clothing is thought to have ‘...like things on things. Like bows and bits like that and erm, I don’t like that...’ (ISABELLE).

‘...you’ll get a shirt in a women’s part of store and then, it’ll be fine, it would be like a boyfriend cut and then they’ll just do some feminine little flowery thing or a bow...it’s just so infuriating!’ (LOUISA).

The fabrics identified as womenswear are similarly stereotypically gendered’... like really soft silks or like summery tops and like chiffons and stuff...’ (ELLA) with ‘frills, flowery, floaty...’ (KEEVA).

In connection with the flimsiness of womenswear, some women (NEV, NOELLE, EVA W.) question its quality and longevity. ‘I think female’s clothes are just a bit, it’s a bit tacky or cheap sometimes’ (NOELLE) with NEV adding, ‘Just like this little top, it’s not going to I mean come on, it’s not going to withstand anything!’ (NEV). In comparison to the way in which she wears menswear, ELLA finds womenswear more firmly attached to trends finding that ‘... I feel like you need to have this, this, this and this...’ (ELLA). For this group, when wearing menswear they are an anomaly and thus there is no set trend.

When commenting on the pilot study photographs of clothing items off the body, (table 4.4.3), ELLA, HAF, ISABELLE, LOUISA, NEV, and NOELLE noted that the pink colour made them think initially that the vest may be designed for a women, with HAF exclaiming ‘I wanna say women’s just because it’s pink! Just the typical stereotype!’ (HAF). KEEVA, NOELLE and EVA W. all found the shirt in pastel stripes to be feminine or too ‘bright’ (NOELLE) for men, yet KEEVA and EVA W. concluded that the shirt was masculine, with NOELLE undecided.

#### 4.4.2.7. Theme 7. The body

*'If I had more of a boy shaped body the clothes I wear would be a few sizes smaller and I would look great in them! (Laughs)'* (LOUISA).

This theme details how the participants view and critique their dressed body (LOUISA above). It also focusses on how participants' may use clothing to control the body.

##### Sub-theme 7.1. Weight.

*'That's what bothers me because I don't want people to go, oh she's so fat and she doesn't even know it!'* (NEV)

Some participants express issues with overweight (JESSICA, NEV, EVA W., NEV, LOUISA), as a current, past or recurring issue. NEV worries about how people may judge her because of this (above), feeling that her body makes her stand out when with friends. She laughs at her own description, that she is seen as the '...little butch lesbian ...You know like in Bridesmaids, Mellissa McCarthy?!' (NEV). Again laughing NEV explains that she is seen this way because she is '...a bit wider whatever! I don't know what word people use, like thicker?!' (NEV). She compares her clothed body to that of her slimmer friend ELLA.

*'Everything I wear, if you put it on ELLA it would look so much cooler. (Laughs) Because she's got a really tiny waist and everything can sit over her, but stuff gets stuck on me'* (NEV).

NEV explained how having lost weight, she now wanted to show off her waist. Yet she maintained her own style and stressed that it is, '...not a typical like Barbie doll, but it's like my own version...with some baggy clothes on rather than tight' (NEV). LOUISA wants to lose weight and is conscious that being overweight combined with her menswear style means that '...to the outer world I'm butch. I hate it!' (LOUISA). In losing weight LOUISA aspires to 'be rocking that!' like '...Shane from the L-Word, rocking like heroin chic in my shirt and jeans!' (LOUISA); here LOUISA is aspiring to be what she calls 'cool dykey' (LOUISA), which represents how she would ideally like to be seen.



## Sub-theme 7.2. Dressing the body.

*‘As long as it’s just skimming the bits that aren’t quite how you want them yet, then that’s all good’ (LOUISA).*

All participants expressed a degree of dissatisfaction about their bodies. Tricks for dressing the body are used to disguise any areas which were not liked (LOUISA above), or to emphasise those which are loved. LOUISA implies that she would like her thighs to be slimmer,

‘...erm, like skinny jeans, no good with thunder thighs, so I go more for a straight cut because it just sort of evens the weight of my legs out’ (LOUISA).

Hips were a common complaint (NEV, EMILY, ISABELLE, LOUISA, NOELLE, JESSICA, EVA W.) as with ISABELLE’s preference for avoiding ‘...anything that like goes out, or anything that would accentuate how big my hips are....’ (ISABELLE).

ELLA and KEEVA who are both very slim with small breasts, felt lucky because they did not have particular body issues. Notably a smaller chest was seen to be easier to dress by all who expressed an opinion ‘... like my boobs never get in the way...’ (ELLA). The word *hang* was used by ELLA in a positive manner to suggest the way in which clothing may drape off her slim frame, ‘so I tend to buy men’s and bigger so that it just hangs off’ (ELLA). EVA W. also stated a preference for clothing that hangs or stands away from the body.

‘I think if I feel something’s very tight it makes me feel fatter and so in my always-aware-of-never-wanting-to-be-fat, I find that things that feel looser feel just feel calmer on me’ (EVA W.).

JESSICA found wearing men’s clothing appealing because it made her feel smaller than she is, saying ‘maybe it’s something to do with the fact that I don’t feel big in men’s clothes’ (JESSICA).

The participants (ELLA, EMILY, ISABELLE, LOUISA, NEV NOELLE, JESSICA, EVA W.) describe how they use clothing to control their body shapes. Wearing oversized tops helped NEV feel more comfortable about her lower body and creates an interesting proportional aesthetic.

‘I used to do that as in like have such big top half things, just to make because it would make my bottom half look skinnier and I always like the proportion of it’ (NEV).

#### 4.4.2.8. Theme 8. Difference, pride and joy.

*‘And that’s my Acne jacket that I bought in Copenhagen. It’s my pride and joy! (Laughs)’ (NEV).*

NEV had a humorous and experimental approach to dressing. She plays on her short stature by wearing an XXL men’s hoodie. ‘...it looks quite comical and I enjoy that. rather than looking normal like everyone else does! (Laughs)’ (NEV).

Difference is important for most participants (ELLA, NEV, KEEVA, HAF, EMILY, ISABELLE, NOELLE, JESSICA, EVA W.), and is coupled with enjoyment in finding the perfect clothing item or looking a particular way. For NEV (above), difference, is in her sample sale Acne jacket, because ‘they’ve put the pockets on wrong! I just like it, because it’s a one off’ (NEV). EVA W. dedicates herself to finding lesser-known online companies such as Carrier Company and is protective of her brands.

‘I’m aware that because I’ve bought things much more from online companies and things, I’m sort of still quite precious about it being oh that’s where I get my jackets!’ (EVA W.).

Creating difference is often found in subtle and carefully considered choices (ELLA, KEEVA, HAF, EMILY, NEV, JESSICA, EVA W.) ELLA’s thin leopard belt, ‘...it just gives you sort of like an extra element to the outfit’ (ELLA). Most of the women (EMILY, NEV, ELLA, KEEVA, JESSICA, EVA W., HAF, LOUISA, ISABELLE), found difference in vintage and charity shops. Some of the accounts allude to joyous experimentation with new clothes and different combinations (ISABELLE, ELLA and EVA W.).

‘...trying different sorts of shapes helps you understand what does suit you and I think it’s also fun! I think that’s a bit of theatrical-ness in me that I still quite like going and trying stuff and thinking oh god! I look awful in that! (Laughs) (EVA W.).

HAF is Welsh, and likes to create difference through customising, and wrote Welsh place names on her denim jacket, about which she says ‘...if it was just plain blue I’d get sort of oh, it’s not got me on it!’ (HAF). HAF often wears brightly coloured unisex items from

a brand called Offend My Eyes, which she says are for LGBTQ and ‘they cater for all sizes and body shapes’ (HAF). The ‘...wacky colourful designs’ (HAF) suit HAF’s love of bright colour and the sportswear inspired shapes offer the loose fit she prefers.

#### 4.4.2.9. Theme 9. Carrying it off.

*‘This person looks like they’ve put on male clothing. This person looks like they’re wearing, it looks more fashionable I suppose’ (JESSICA).*

This theme emerged when the participants were responding to the photographs of the two models (Section 3.3 and 4.3), The discussion became about what looked better rather than what was feminine. Personal style can be discussed in terms of *carrying it off* (JESSICA, above). Defined as,

‘Carry off *vb.* 3. To handle (a situation) successfully: (Collins Dictionary, 2016: 112).

*Carrying it off* is included as a theme because the women discussed how wearing outfits and looking good was different across individuals, as defined by HAF,

‘Sort of in a way where someone can wear clothing and it looks good on them. Things like what you’re wearing if I wore it, it probably wouldn’t look right on me at all’ (HAF).

Pointedly, when discussing the images of the models in clothing some women (5) specifically noted that the dark-haired model (the researcher), who owned the clothing, carried it off or ‘looked better’ (JESSICA) in the clothing than the blonde haired model, ‘...it almost appears that that’s something she would wear anyway’ (ELLA).

Feeling good in clothing was linked to self-confidence, EVA W. defines this well.

‘I think it’s about clothing and confidence for me I think it’s to do with when someone shines in something and makes it look good it’s often they look more at home and more confident or it suits them better’ (EVA W.).

NEV compares herself with a friend who can carry off odd combinations of clothing, ‘...because I don’t think if I was just more confident I’d wear that! (two pairs of denim shorts and Westwood croc platforms)’ (NEV). This is about communication of self and being ‘...confident in what you want to wear and he wants to wear that...’ (NEV).

#### 4.4.3. Gendered perception of clothing on and off the body.

This section reviews the findings from questions posed about the gendered perception of the two models in identical clothing and clothing off the body (also see sections 3.3 and 4.3). As explained in the method in section 3.4.7, these questions sought to extend findings from the pilot study in section 4.3. These were the clothing is perceived differently when it is not on a body, and the long blonde-haired model is the most feminine. Face to face discussion would incite more in-depth responses. Results can be seen integrated into the main participant interview results where appropriate, in section 4.4.2 above.

The results are discussed below and table 4.4.3 shows a summary. The main findings for clothing off the body were that the shirt and blue slacks were seen to be definitively male. The collar, tie, wide cuffs and hanging loop were also seen to be typical of menswear. For blue slacks, the pockets were the main characteristic noted to be masculine. The skinny jeans were seen to be definitively female, because of the short leg and the shape. Interestingly, the pink vest was said to be a man's top.

When asked about the perceived femininity of the two models, the questions were intriguing for the participants and were not answered directly. However what correlates with the pilot study findings is that the combination of long blonde hair and pink vest was feminine. When compared with the finding that when off the body the pink vest was thought to be men's, this response compounds the original finding from section 4.3, that clothing is perceived differently when it is not on a body. Here the female body is seen to embody femininity, in a vest considered to be for a man. The results can differ depending on the respondents. For example, in the wider online pilot study, the pastel shirt image had the blonde model as significantly feminine at 85%. In this interview situation, and with these women who are attuned to ideas about gender presentation and fashion the result was different. The pastel shirt image created intrigue and discussion. The question was not answered directly, with the participants focusing on what looked better (Eva W.) rather than if it was masculine or feminine. This was described quite intuitively as how someone can seem to suit clothing. The women described how clothes can look like they belong to someone, through how the person reacts when they wear them, and this was not associated with the fit of clothing, see

Gendered perception of garments off the body.					
Are the garments designed for a male or female body? Characteristics identified as justification of gendered perception of the clothing.					
	Male	Female	Either	Male Characteristic	Female characteristic
Pastel stripe shirt with tie.	8	1	1	Hanging loop, wide cuffs, tie, big, shoulder shape, straight cut, collar.	Colours. Collar.
Skinny jeans	1	7	2	The side it zips to.	Pockets, stretch, high fly (zip), short leg, shape.
Pink vest	4	3	3	Neckline, deep armhole, straight cut, car print.	Pink, length, neckline, label.
Blue slacks	8	0	2	Jetted pocket, pockets (specified type), back pockets, side adjuster, straight cut, big.	Jetted pocket. Side adjuster.
Gendered perception of models two models in identical clothing.					
Which model do you think is the most feminine? Why?					
	Short brown hair.	Long blonde hair.	neither	Comments	
Pink vest, blue slacks	0	4	2	Long blonde hair (stereotype) x 8 Typically feminine figure x 6. Androgynous body makes the clothes look androgynous x 1 Short hair makes you feel more feminine in men's clothing x 1. What looks good as important x 1	
Pastel stripe shirt, skinny jeans.	0	1	0	What looks good as important x 5 Big shirt hides the feminine body x 3.	

*Table 4.4.3. Gendered perception of models in clothing and clothing off the body.*

carrying it off (p105). This accords with theories about gender presentation and embodiment of clothing in terms of feeling right (Woodward, 2006) (section 2.4). This area of research needs further testing, in a specific study to triangulate the results thoroughly.

#### 4.4.4. Clothing Diary Photographs.

Observations of the clothing diary photographs are shown in table 4.4.4. The data extracted from the photographs is integrated into the analysis above as appropriate, such as details of colour and the preferred clothing types of the women. The photographs were used throughout the practice as a reference and enabled the researcher to gain a clear understanding of the dressing habits of each woman.

Participant clothing diary observations.				
P	Clothing types	Detail.	Colours/pattern.	Silhouette
NOELLE	Long skirt (gather/pleat waist), wide leg trousers, boyfriend jeans, cardigan. Men's - long & short sleeve t-shirts, hoodie and coat.	Gathers, pleats, too-long sleeves, layering. Will define waist with belt but cover with cardigan or hoodie. Heavy boots. Headscarf. Belt.	Black, grey, white, cream, navy, jade (accent). Stripes, graphic prints on t-shirts. Beige (scarf).	Narrow rectangle. Long.
JESSICA	Chunky oversized jumpers, leggings, high waist tapered levis, men's/unisex t-shirts, men's shirts (from boyfriend)	Big tops, slim bottoms (blue or black), too-long sleeves. May define waist when wearing jeans. Layering. Heavy boots, trainers, beany hat, backpack, not-done hair.	White, cream, blue (denim), black, red, yellow, tan. Prints (t-shirts). Bright pink (hat). Mint (converse).	Inverted triangle. Boxy top.
KEEVA	Oversized shirts, knits, sweats, t-shirts, with slim jeans. Men's T-shirts and polos not oversized, with men's slim jeans, jogger jeans (Topman). Oversized vintage men's formal trousers, tucked in top. Turtleneck.	Ankles showing, layering. Shirts and polos done up to the top. Noted she likes dungarees (not shown in photos). Balance baggy with skin showing or tight. Tube socks, vans, docs, beany hat, micro bunches in hair (sometimes). Sometimes make-up.	Black, bottle green, sage green, white, tan check, tan (sheepskin), white, sometimes blue denim. Stripes, plaid, graphic prints (t-shirts).	Rectangle. Top can be boxy.
HAF	Hoodies, shirts, t-shirts, jean jacket, army combat trousers, patterned trousers (baggy or slim but not tight).	Some baggy, unisex, layers, customising, tattoos, piercings, short hair. Glasses on string, gloves (often fingerless), caps, beany hat, scarf, trainers, docs.	All. Bright. Tartan, graphic prints, stripes.	Oval. Slightly rounded rectangle.
ISABELLE	Men's shirts, t-shirts, jacket, taper or skinny jeans. Gym leggings, hoodie to hips. Tight top. Work – women's trousers, slim jumper.	Sharp bobbed hair with short fringe and make-up (most days) defines her look. Trainers, heavy boots, lace-up shoes. Oversized	Black, grey, white, bottle green, washed blue (jeans).	Variable.
EMILY	Black high waist trousers (tapered or wide). Stripe L/S jersey tops. Knit jumpers to hips. White shirts, masculine trench, overcoat.	Ankles usually showing. Sometimes red or black nails. Brogues, trainers, heavy sole sandal (docs type)	Black, white. Cream and grey (jumpers). Red (jumpers, scarf). Stripes. Orange (trouser-suit).	Diamond.
EVA W.	Oversized shirts, padded waistcoat. Wide cropped trousers. White t-shirts with 40's film star names. Workwear.	Unisex. Layers. Blonde (sliver) hair, red lipstick and nails. Ankles showing. Birkenstocks, men's brogues, Adidas trainers. Tights under trousers. Crazy socks.	Black, navy, white, stripes. Brown/tan (corduroy dress). Red check (shirt).	Oval.
ELLA	Men's – combats, t-shirt's (to fit), loose hoodies jumpers (some women's). Levis (wash blue taper/white ripped). Denim skirt (washed blue, short), workwear jacket. Red shirred bodice strappy dress (t-shirt under).	Belted waist often. Ankles showing. Balance baggy with skin showing or tight. Workwear jacket as cover up. Layering. Birkenstocks, Superga trainers, belts, crazy socks.	Washed blue denim, white, khaki green, black, grey, stripes, spots, red (dress), jade green tiger jumper.	Diamond or rectangle.
NEV	Menswear work trousers, t-shirts (some cropped), hoodies, formal trousers. Big skirt belted at waist. Women's tight crop top.	Messy hair. Oversized. Belted waist. Balance baggy with skin showing/tight. Workwear jacket cover up. Ankles showing. Converse, heavy sole sandals, clown shoes.	Black, white, navy, khaki, black and white gingham, baby pink hoodie.	Oval but with some angles.
LOUISA	Work - Patterned and plain shirts, corduroy jeans, suit jackets. Casual - graphic t-shirts, jeans (boot-cut), hoodies, body-warmer, plaid shirts. Suits for formal. Women's hooded masculine winter coat.	Menswear as a man may wear it. Beany hat sometimes. Trainers, brogues.	Black, brown, navy, cream (shirts), printed shirts, glesicaphic t-shirts, plaid shirts (blue, burgundy).	Rounded rectangle.

Table 4.4.4. Participant clothing diary observations summary.

#### 4.4.5. Discussion.

When discussing clothing comfort, some women (EMILY, JESSICA) talked about feeling 'free' (Jessica) when covered up in menswear, and feeling confident, and sexy in trousers and being able to move and 'dance better' (EMILY). Thus freedom, confidence and sexy was associated with masculine clothing. The women rarely chose to wear skirts and dresses for work, because they were 'difficult to navigate' (NOELLE). All women were concerned about body coverage (sexualisation and modesty); cover-all menswear was straightforward, functional, practical and concealing, and was viewed positively, providing confidence through physical and psychological comfort (section 5.5). Some participants wore menswear to avoid being objectified, feminine womenswear was non-functional, impractical, revealing, and caused feelings of vulnerability (section 2.2.2). (section 2.4.3). Young (2005) names this sexualised body revealing womenswear as 'the slit aesthetic', and includes for example, '...cut-outs in midriff at the waist...' (Young, 2005: 67). Tight clothing was described as causing discomfort and distress for some (EVA W., NEV), especially around the stomach and waist (NEV), however loose clothing was 'calm' (EVA W.) and an antidote to 'always-aware-of-never-wanting-to-be-fat' (EVA W.). This accords with Alexander, Connell and Presley (2005) who found that 'when a garment does not fit, consumers often blame their own body instead of the garment, which in turn causes a negative body image' (Alexander, Connell and Presley, 2005: 54). The body can therefore be in the way and blamed, instead of the shape and size of the clothing. Where space, or ease, is between the body and clothing, a physical separation is created. This space, a disassociation of sorts, enables the wearer to leave the body behind the clothing; thus, the body holds less significance for the wearer (section 2.3.1). The practice could provide space for the body, and with this, focus on the wellbeing of the wearer through the generation of positive responses to the garment on the body.

The participants placed importance on their own physical and psychological comfort. This can be associated with 'feeling right' (Woodward, 2005), in the sense that when wearing the clothing they feel emotionally at ease with their appearance (section 2.4). 'Carrying it off', was a description of how clothing can suit a person and look right, and can be associated with feeling right through the outward communication of psychological comfort. Boulton and Jerrard (2000) find that,

‘bodily behaviour [US], - movement, gesture, posture, etc.—and clothing characteristics interact to produce a complexity of meaning, which both informs the process of selfing [creating a self] and communicates some measure of that self to others’ (Boulton and Jerrard, 2000: 303).

The manipulation of proportion and scale could create interesting shapes when on the body or create contrasts between body and garment (ELLA) (clothing shapes and proportion). Loose and square menswear was chosen to enable this proportional play to occur. The desired loose fit found in men’s clothing made participants feel better about their bodies; bigger clothes can make the body feel smaller (JESSICA). Large scale was implied, through words such as baggy, loose, wide and massive, which were used by the participants to describe their clothing. These words had a higher frequency within the transcripts than adjectives for small.

Masculine and feminine stereotypes, were used descriptively when identifying gendered clothing characteristics, for example the collar on a men’s shirt is ‘sturdy’ (menswear p99), whereas a women’s collar is ‘soft’ (ELLA) (womenswear p100). Each one of these examples demonstrates opposites or binaries. This juxtaposition creates ideas for the practice in terms of the mixing up what is known, such as sturdy and soft fabrics, or varied proportions. Techniques or features from men’s and womenswear could be combined to create variations of the balance of masculine and feminine, as created in outfits by the participants. The shirt dress, discussed by EVA W. as ‘simplistic’ and ‘purposeful’ (EVA W.), was an example of two garments combined, linking menswear and womenswear; the amalgamation of *shirt* (established menswear) and *dress* (established womenswear). Pockets featured heavily in the women’s accounts of gendered clothing. Practical pockets were described as being less common in womenswear, unlike non-functional characteristics such as frills, bows and ‘...things on things’ (ISABELLE). The addition of large usable pockets was seen to change womenswear garments from frivolous to functional, and may offer a means of reproducing menswear function with a shirtdress for women.

Gendered clothing and accessories were used to create a balance of masculinity and femininity within an outfit (Balance p91) (section 2.3.2). The addition of a masculine item to an outfit can tip the balance away from femininity, or vice versa, such as when



Emily wears Doctor Marten shoes to 'anchor the look' (EMILY), a strategy of 'compensatory masculinity' (Brownmiller, 1986) is adopted, where the chunky shoe balances the outfit if it appears too feminine. These carefully considered details were seen to be instrumental in accurately expressing complex identities. The gender scale scores noted from the interviews, were seen to be illustrative of the women's individual clothing habits in terms of gender balance. For example, LOUISA rated herself as an 8 (quite masculine), and wore menswear most often. In terms of application to the practice, this suggested developing clothing along a scale. Sequential developments that provide variety in application of the preferences, may be a method for meeting the needs of this group of women. Each woman in the group discussed gendered clothing in connection with the importance of dressing appropriately for an occasion or daily activities (section 2.5.2). Negrin (2016) suggests that these selections are detailed, personal, and specific to the moment. Findings indicate that conforming to social conventions of dressing was an individual choice with some of the women being more experimental whilst others tending to conform.

The women expressed varying degrees of concerns about body image, as seen in 'body'. Tricks for dressing the body were used to disguise any areas which were not liked, or to emphasise those which were loved, often seen as balancing the bodily proportions (Tate, 2004). The scale and shape of menswear enabled this to happen. NEV was interesting in that, she discussed her body weight widely yet only used the word *fat* once throughout the interview, other words such as wide and especially *thick*, disassociate from the body as words not commonly used in this context, *fat* however, being very clear when describing an overweight body (section 2.4.1). Murray (2006) states that it is society's need to preserve or adhere to normative cultural expectations of the gendered body that cause body monitoring. NEV understood how to use clothing to enhance or detract from areas of her body. NEV used this skill to present herself in a style which brought her '...acceptance of the body, including aspects that are inconsistent with media images' (Tykla, 2012: 658). Her aesthetic was oversized menswear, often cut down or rolled up to make it shorter, along with some womenswear. Sometimes the waist was emphasized and often the ankles were shown as these were the narrowest parts of NEV's body, and also due to current trends. NEV's body and style challenged these normative identities as discussed by Murray (2006),

demonstrating that individual body type does not denote sexuality, and gendered presentation can be about personal ways of dressing rather than simply a statement of sexuality. Young (2005) explains that the freedom to thoroughly immerse the self in expressing changeable identities is the joy in creating a look, and is the purpose of fashion. When developing garments for this group of women, methods should incorporate focus on the body. This is not a technique for working to recreate the body shape, as is often seen in clothing design for women (section 2.2.3), but with a view to working in collaboration with the body to create shapes that promote wearer wellbeing.

Pisut and Connell (2007) found that body confidence can be a product of clothing selection and styling, for example for ELLA the body should not 'get in the way' (ELLA). Clothing should 'sit over' the body (NEV) or 'hang off' (ELLA), and to achieve this the women buy menswear in bigger sizes. This word *hang* gives an impression of the fabric not touching the body, feelings of space, and clothing not being interfered with by the body. The body as a hanger was seen as positive, with the inference of weightless or the body not touching the clothing suggesting how the participants may then feel physically lighter. It is noted by Alexander, Connell and Presley (2005) that fit preference is variable between individuals.

Observation indicates that people differ in their preference for clothing fit, from garments that cling tightly to the body to garments that barely touch the body. The snugness or ease a person desires in clothing depends on one's personal preferences, attitudes, or the look consumer's desire (Alexander, Connell and Presley, 2005: 52).

As thrift shoppers, many of the participants were used to variable fit, such as KEEVA who was unaware of her real size. Buying 'second- hand' EVA W., requires the wearer to work with the available size. This could be seen as a variation of *one size fits all*, which produces a range of fits on different sized bodies, and suggests ideas for clothing that accepts variable fit or anticipates bodily variation through the offer of adjustment solutions.

Inspiration for dressing can come from a range of sources, and was documented in 'difference pride and joy' with the women using menswear to experiment with their individual style. Incorporating for example, playing with 'clothing shapes and proportion' and to communicate a personalised gendered identity (ELLA, EVA W., NEV,

JESSICA,). Young (2005) examines this freedom of aesthetic experimentation afforded to women by fashion, finding it to be a 'privilege of femininity' and one 'which is largely closed to the everyday lives of men' (Young, 2005: 186). As shown in 'the gendering of clothing', menswear was enjoyed for this experimental use. Womenswear was encumbered by notions of fit and embedded feminine ideals. However, menswear worn by a woman was not prescribed in the sense of how it should fit the body, thus it was easier to style in a variety of ways and just 'cooler' (ELLA). Womenswear was considered to be problematic and lacking in practical uses, such that there is an overarching negation towards feminine womenswear as serious useful clothing.

#### 4.5. Conclusion.

Loose clothing that provides space for the body has been one of the salient findings in this section. In the archival fieldwork, square cut shirts were wide and spacious, they were long and covered the body almost to the knees. Gussets provided depth space and volume, and additionally space was offered through gathering around the neck of the square cut shirt. Observation of the pit brow images, noted space in clothing when worn loose through the wearing of men's garments. It was interesting to observe how the clothing hung off the body. The participants talked about how garments can make shapes with the body, such as oversized garments that hang on the body in a certain way. This included how combinations of garment shapes and sizes can produce interesting outfits. Juxtaposition of the pit brow women's crumpled shirts over wide cropped trouser legs can identify with these dressing techniques. Proportion was discussed in connection with how clothing on the body can be a play on proportion. The square shirt cutting process was interesting in working with proportion. Participants expressly disliked tight or restrictive clothing that would sexualise or reveal the body, compounding ideas about space around the body and coverage. Coverage was reflected in the layers created through the square cut shirt binder, which reinforced the shoulder of the shirt.

The participants were keen on function and this finding accords with the functional construction observed on the square cut shirt; construction that provides additional function. This was unapologetic function, visual from the outside of the shirt. Workwear

can be referenced here, particularly functional construction such as knee patches of reinforcement to the shoulders on workwear jackets. Visual parallels are made with the square cut shirt binders and gussets, and contrast stitching aligns with ideas for visual construction that is unapologetic.

Pockets were a signifier of masculine in the Victorian era as noted by Matthews in section 2.3.3 and they were identified by Ella as such in the participant enquiry. Pockets provided the function required by the women, were practical, and referenced historical notions of masculinity. Examples seen in the archival fieldwork were varied and with a formal aesthetic, being viewed on smart men's trousers. Pockets for the practice could be larger and more akin to a workwear aesthetic which was liked by some women. Pockets were salient in these findings were taken forward into the practice.

Adjustment solutions observed in the archival fieldwork used hardware and straps for adjustment. These techniques can be applied to garments for the women when working to fit varied body types. Rolling and hitching of clothing to adjust the body was noted in the pit brow imagery. A feeling of clothing fitting comfortably and loosely to the body was seen, in the sense of aged clothing that is somewhat moulded to the body. Adjustment techniques can draw in and crumple of fabric which is similar visually to gathering, but is an adjustment method.

The half openings on Victorian shirts presented ideas for specific placement of design detail to a garment front through the use of tucks and frills. According to the participant findings, frills may not be liked, however this idea of applying detail in some form to the half-front opening is interesting for the practice. This may be a subtle way to introduce detail, in a form that is not overpowering or feminine. The shirts were long and referenced Eva W's ideas about the dress shirt as a merging of men's and womenswear.

Combinations of these findings can produce design ideas for experimental garments for these women. Varied combinations or balances of these ideas could appeal to each individual woman's personal preferences. The researchers sketch of the pit brow women in section 4.2.5.1 epitomises the researcher's vision for the comfort and loose

fit desired by this group of women. The participant findings and the pilot were useful in aligning ideas about how perception of clothing is impacted by the wearer, in the sense that the wearer brings something of themselves to the garment in carrying it off. This observation by the participants is accorded in the literature review by theories of embodiment, such as Negrin (2016) who suggests that the gendered body in any form impacts upon clothing when it is worn, and this is felt internally by the wearer and expressed externally. This idea for practice which priorities the person, placing them at the centre of design, will be embraced in the development of garments for this specific group. I want this for the women.

## Chapter 5. Practice.

### 5.1. Introduction.

My practice is a process of observation, experimentation, manipulation, reflection and response. It keeps the participant enquiry as a focal point and takes inspiration from the clothing and pit brow archival findings, and the photographic pilot study. Figure 5.1.1 demonstrates the positioning of the work within the wider study.

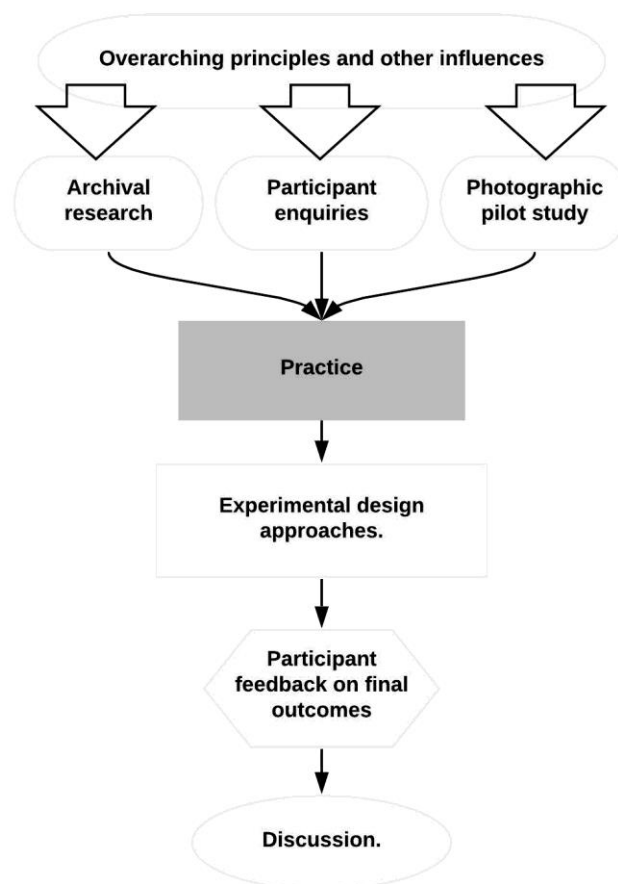
It is my individual response as a creative worker that drives the practice. McQuillan (2013) states that every designer makes work differently and thus the range of possible outcomes is variable. This said I posit the output as a *response*, and do so with awareness that alternative design strands are possible. Other Influences are also recognised as valuable, these stem from conferences, exhibitions, and observation of my environment. As a designer, I naturally draw on visual cues and work with similar themes as this is my continuously developing interest. *Overarching principles* for my design practice are concerned with waste management, and these principles are noted as equally valuable to this practice.

The practice journal is an edited and curated narrative of the practice-based research; it is a vivid visual record of my thought process and the creative and academic influences I have exposed myself to throughout the course of this PhD. The journal represents the creative process of the practice in a way not possible within the confines of this thesis.

This work aims to contribute new approaches for clothing developments, generated in response to the participant preferences presented in section 4.4. Figure 5.1.2 illustrates the themes identified in the participant enquiry as shaded rectangles, and the associated preferences in white ovals. The participants spoke strongly about enjoyment in dressing using scale and proportion to create outfits that were interesting aesthetically, or that flattered their body. They linked this to loose clothing, space between body and garment and a desire for coverage of the body shape and skin. Aspects of menswear such as function and practicality, and simple boxy shapes were popular. The preferences all

connected to wellbeing through physical and psychological comfort, in feeling that clothing represents their identity.

To design creatively in response to the preferences expressed by the women and to develop experimental approaches to the garment designs, I began by referencing the cut of Victorian square cut men's shirts. This design process reflected the women's preferences through proportional cutting, coverage through layered construction techniques, and the large, boxy shape of the shirt. See section 4.2. In terms of the development of design ideas directly related to the women's preferences, a method referencing the square cut process was ideal for underpinning design. Victorian garment construction techniques associated with this creative design process became integral to the experimental approaches to the production of my garments, and developed the practice methods towards intuitive and responsive making. These experimental clothing developments aim to offer garments that appeal to the participant group of women and crucially addresses the wellbeing of the wearer. The study aims to offer a final model of design preferences, for use in the development of garments for women.



*Figure 5.1.1. Model placing the practice within the wider study and demonstrating influences.*

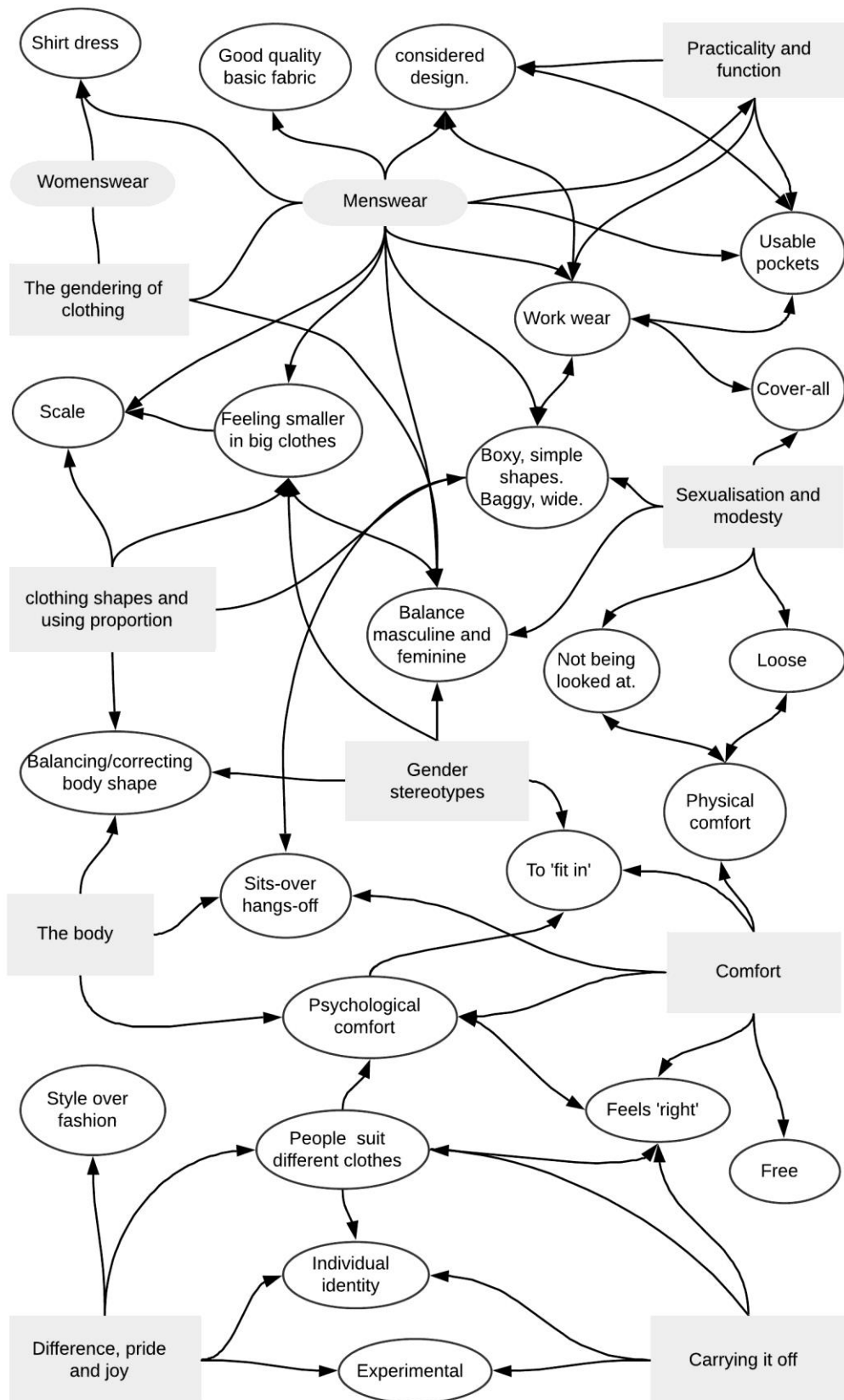


Figure 5.1.2. Model of the participant preferences in association with the themes.



#### 5.1.1: Overview of chapter.

This section addresses the objectives as shown in table 5.1.3. Section 5.2 explains how the experimental practice generated methods for the development of clothing for women who wear menswear. The practice outcomes in section 5.3, are explained with close reference to the practice journal. The participant group provided feedback on the outcomes and section 5.4 provides the method and findings. The women's feedback was evaluated alongside my own reviews and reflections, and is discussed in section 5.5. Conclusions derived from this section will inform the conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image, see chapter 6.

Objectives addressed by the practice and participant feedback.	
Objective	Justification
2. To analyse how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources	Practice exploring the impact of proportional adjustment of the square cut shirt on the gendered perception of the garment.
4. To develop a conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image.	The participant enquiry findings feed into the practice. Participant feedback of the practice outcomes informs the conceptual model.
5. To develop an experimental design approach by reviewing and reflecting on the process of constructing a series of garments that respond to women's gender related preferences.	Research findings inform the practice, which develops experimental design approaches. Reviewing and reflecting on the process with reference to the women's preferences.
6. To evaluate the experimental design approach as a model for the development of clothing for women.	To use participant feedback on the outcomes as a tool for the evaluation of the experimental design approach.

*Table 5.1.3. Objectives addressed by the practice and the participant feedback.*

## 5.2. Generation of the practice methods.

### 5.2.1. Overview of the process.

The methods were developed in retrospect, and were extracted from the practice on completion; working through the findings creatively was the process for generating the methods. The design thinking was applied to the practice, combining the participant preferences and the research findings in a variety of ways to form experimental design approaches, it is these complex structures which form the origins of the design methods.

The practice relied strongly on the Victorian square cut shirt cut and its construction process in responding to the participant preferences. Knowledge of this historical construction process is therefore crucial for understanding many methods, and it is detailed below.

### 5.2.2. The Victorian square cut shirt cut and construction process.

#### 5.2.2.1. Cutting.

Shep and Cariou (1999) cite 'rules for cutting out' in the *Workingwoman's Guide* (appendix C). Figure 5.2.1. is a diagram for cutting out the shirt. The diagram does not show the 'skirt' (Shep & Cariou, 1999: xxiv); the *skirt* is the body of the shirt that is cut to knee length and uses the entire width of the fabric. The smaller pieces of the shirt such as sleeves 'S' and collar 'C' are shown in the cutting plan; numbers shown are units of measurement called 'nails', each is two and a quarter inches (Shep & Cariou, 1999). Fabric is cut from selvedge to selvedge, and all pieces are square or rectangular leaving no wasted fabric (Lindqvist, 2015; Shep & Cariou, 1999). The sizes of the shirt pieces are drafted proportionally using the length of the skirt as a gauge; the sleeves and the collar for example, are approximately half of the skirt length, and the *wristbands* (cuffs) are half the length of the collar.

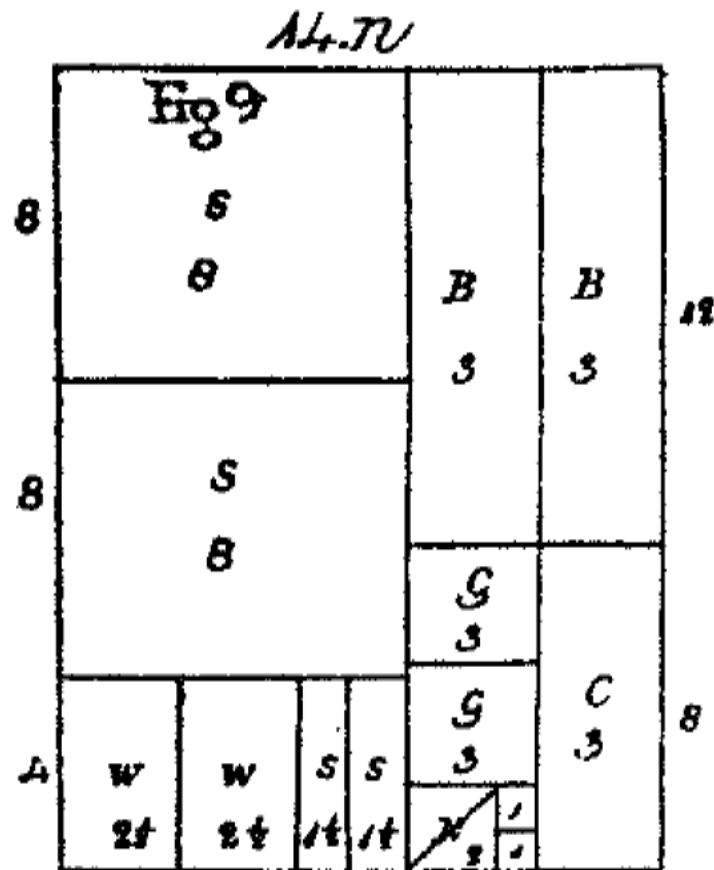


Figure 5.2.1 – Square cut shirt plan, (Shep & Cariou, 1999: xxv).

#### 5.2.2.2. Construction and shape making using the square cut method.

Shep and Cariou (1999) provides an ‘explanation of making up shirts’, taken from the *Workingwoman’s Guide 1837*, which describes the process of creating a three-dimensional garment, see appendix C. More important than step-by-step details of the shirt construction is the overarching ethos of making. Lindqvist (2015) states that unconventional square and rectangular pieces become three-dimensional garments, when gussets and gathering are applied. For example, the sleeve gusset creates space, function and comfort in the armhole; the gathered neck enables the wide body to fit into the collar. This making process is simple, and seems to be somewhat intuitive, with the maker required to gather and manipulate garment pieces into place with basic instruction.

### 5.2.3. Experimental design approaches: the Victorian square cut process.

The square cut shirt cut does not involve a paper pattern, but is a drafting process provided as a list of instructions. With *flat cutting*, shape is established during drafting, a process that plots key body measurements onto paper and uses techniques such as darts to create shapes that conform to the body. Patterns can also be created by modelling cloth directly onto a mannequin which is then transferred to paper or card. The square cut process is simpler, as it requires working directly onto the cloth and drafting squares and rectangles which do not need to refer to the body at the stage of cutting. Emphasis is placed on how the pieces are manipulated and *sewn*, rather than how they are *cut*, as the means to create a garment that fits the body. The absence of a pattern, offered a fluidity and freedom to the task of cutting; the process was perfect for working experimentally, being quick and responsive. In construction, combinations of gathering, gusset placement, size of sleeves and collars, is open to interpretation, and I suggest that pieces could be sewn differently, working the fabric intuitively. When developing ideas for garment making, personal interpretation provides opportunities for the development of design ideas.

I wanted to test the *rules for cutting out* and the *explanation of making shirts* found in Shep and Cariou (1999); the toile is in half scale toile for less fabric waste (figure 5.2.2). Making this initial toile was an essential tool for understanding the construction method, by familiarising myself with techniques and order of construction.



Figure 5.2.2 – Half scale square cut shirt made in lightweight calico.

### 5.3. Practice methods.

Methods generated as described above are documented under headings grouping them in types, these are *techniques*, *creative working practices*, and *body, garment and size*. The first method responds to my thinking regarding the square cut shirt process, and sits under a separate heading, *The Square Cut Proportional Exploration*.

Findings associated with the development of each method are clearly shown as *research links* under each heading, and can be referenced in the associated findings sections. Participant preferences specifically influencing a method are included as research links using the theme name, such as comfort, or the body; as seen in figure 5.1.2.

#### 5.3.1. The Square Cut Proportional Exploration.

*Testing the influence of proportion on the gendered perception of Victorian square cut shirts.*

Research links: Shapes and using proportion. The gendering of clothing. Clothing archives.

This explorative cutting technique was influenced by how the square cut shirt is cut proportionally (section 5.2). To carry out proportional exploration, a method of planned changes and rules was devised to regulate how changes would be made to the original dimensions of the garment pieces. This method of pre-planned changes was designed to explore how changing the proportions of the cut pieces, may alter the gendered perception of the completed garment and to explore my thinking about interpretation in the making (section 5.2.3). The outcomes of stages one and two were exhibited at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Manchester Metropolitan Postgraduate Research Conference 'Provoking Discourse' 07/03/18 (section 5.4), initial garments were exhibited with the aim of gathering feedback regarding the gendered perception of the garments in their altered forms. By talking about the garments with delegates at the conference, the process aimed to address objective two as justified in table 5.1.2.

This explorative method of pre-planned changes involves the proportional resizing of the garment pieces, carried out in four stages of rules and changes (below). All shirt

toiles were cut and constructed in half scale for waste minimisation, and because *trying on* was not necessary; for simplicity the Victorian unit of measurement ‘nail’, was amended to 6cm making one nail at half scale 3cm rather than 2.85cm. When planning, each lay plan was drawn on graph paper to one-sixth scale; 1cm to 1n (nail).

*5.3.1.1. Stage 1; Half Scale Toile 1. An exemplar of the method.*

The first four pattern pieces at the top of the lay plan are the sleeves (S) and the binders (B) (explained in section 4.2), see figure 5.2.1 above, these are reduced vertically by a quarter of their original size. Pieces to the lower portion of the lay are gusset (G), collar (C), wristband (W), shoulder strap (S), neck gusset (N), and flap gusset (F); these are adjusted to *best fit* the remaining fabric, the size of which is fixed to that of the standard shirt of 14nail/42cm x 20nail 60cm at half scale. In order to control how the sleeve fits into the armhole the horizontal sleeve dimension is fixed, this rule is applied to the horizontally binder dimension for consistency. The lay plan for this shirt (Stage 1:1) is shown drafted on graph paper to one-sixth scale in figure 5.3.1.

*5.3.1.2. Summary of all stages.*

Table 5.3.2 shows rules for the four stages and the planned changes for each shirt piece within each stage. In stages one and two, the fabric length was restricted to that denoted in Shep and Cariou (1999), of 42cm x 60 cm at half scale.

In stages three and four the fabric length was not restricted, to accommodate the enlarged proportion of the shirt pieces. This enabled the method to be unlimited in terms of how big and small the squares and rectangles could be, and the explorative garments that would result from this. The full width from selvedge to selvedge is used (14 nail/42cm), and this is a constant rule. Figure 5.3.3 shows graph paper lay plans for toiles 2-10 drawn up in response to the planned rules and changes (see figure 5.3.1 for stage 1:1 lay plan).

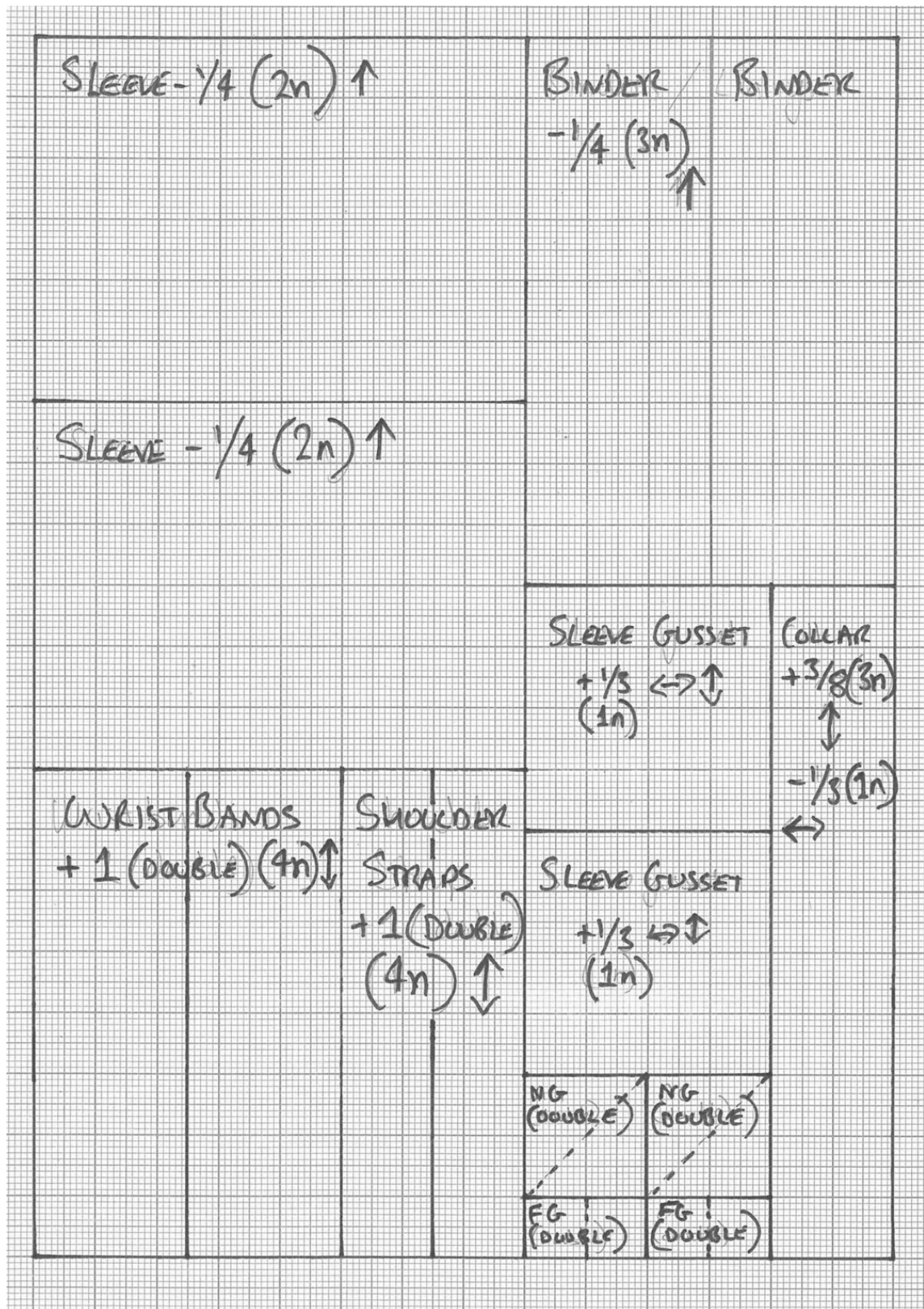


Figure 5.3.1. Lay plan for stage 1:1 drafted to one-sixth scale. Shown in full size.

Stage: toile number	Rule	Sleeve	Binder	Sleeve gusset	Collar	Wristband	Shoulder strap	Neck gusset	Flap gusset
Stage 1. Restricted to original fabric size.									
1:1	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.
1:2	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.
1:3	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.
Stage 2. Restricted to original fabric size.									
2:4	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.	Best fit.
Stage 3. No fabric constraints, therefore rules set for resizing of all pieces.									
3:5	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$ , plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$
3:6	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$ , plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$
3:7	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$ , plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$
Stage 4. No fabric constraints therefore rules set for resizing of all pieces.									
4:8	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$ , minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Plus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$	Minus $\frac{1}{4}$
4:9	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$ , minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Plus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$	Minus $\frac{1}{2}$
4:10	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$ , minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Plus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$	Minus $\frac{3}{4}$

Table 5.3.2. Square cut proportional exploration. Rules for the four stages and planned changes.





Figure 5.3.3. Graph paper lay plans for toiles 2 to 10.

### 5.3.2. Techniques.

#### 5.3.2.1. Reinforcement. Layers, opacity, translucency.

Research links: Sexualisation and Modesty. Comfort. Practicality and function (section 4.4) Archival research (section 4.2)

Reinforcement accords with sexualisation and modesty in addressing ideas of coverage and concealment; not being sexualised by their clothing was important to the women. Translucency becomes apparent when other areas of the garment are layered in reinforcement. Influenced by the square cut shirt binders and gussets, which offer reinforcement to the garment by layering (binder) and strengthening areas of stress (gusset). The idea of reinforcement addresses the participant preferences of physical and psychological comfort which are both symbolically represented and physically addressed here. This method explores and celebrates reinforcement, by allowing construction to be visible (figure 5.3.4). Layers provide and reveal the functional construction in a garment; layers create added density, thus revealing reinforcement and combinations of light and heavyweight fabrics can mimic this effect in a garment. McQuillan (2011) explains how cutting pieces from two different cloths can promote varied results. Gussets are used to reinforce, and here they additionally draw attention to areas where space is added; this can be communicated using varied weights or different fabric colours to highlight the area.

#### 5.3.2.2. Hanging loops and Pockets.

Research links: Gender stereotypes. The gendering of clothing. Practicality and function. (section 4.4). Archival research (section 4.2)

Hanging loops (figure 5.3.5) and pockets are important for bringing function and practicality to a garment. Historically women were denied pockets, because they interfered with dress silhouettes (Matthews, 2010). Here pockets bring function to garments for women and make associations with menswear garments. *Hands in pockets* makes women stand differently, referencing theories of embodiment, pockets promote ease in comportment. Pockets provide warmth and storage. (figure 5.3.4 and 5.3.6).

#### 5.3.2.3. Box pleats.

Research links: Comfort. Clothing shapes and using proportion. Practicality and function (section 4.4). Pit Brow and clothing archives (section 4.2)

When *Sketching over* I identified a box pleat shape in images of the Pit Brow women. The box pleat links to Victorian men's shirts and is an associated feature of menswear as a standard feature in present shirt making, it suppresses fabric volume at the stitch line whilst providing space and shape within the body of the garment. The box pleat can be sharp and neat when pressed flat, garments with this feature seem to be orderly or smart. When compared to gathering in the square cut shirt process, a technique also suppressing volume, these ideas for neatness are accented. (figure 5.3.5).

#### 5.3.2.4. 'Over-sewn' stitching.

Research links: Clothing shapes and using proportion. Practicality and function (section 4.4).

'Over-sewing' is a method defined by the researcher as a process of stitching beyond where stitching may conventionally stop; it is important to differentiate from 'overstitch', a decorative stitch to bind fabric edges. This method seeks to emphasise the importance of stitch in the process of making by increasing its visibility; it celebrates the function of stitching, to fuse and reinforce (figure 5.3.6). Backstitching is a known technique used at the end of a stitch line to secure it and prevent unravelling. Over-sewing exacerbates this standard stitching process by adding layers of backstitching,



Figure 5.3.4. Reinforcement. Layers, opacity, translucency, and pockets.



Figure 5.3.5. Hanging loops and box pleats.



Figure 5.3.6. Over-sewn pocket.

making the end of the stitch line visibly denser. Stitched lines are often visible in work wear as topstitching; stitching in this way makes links to this method by revealing construction. As in work wear topstitching, over-sewing is applied in either contrast or self-colour thread.

### 5.3.3. Responsive Making.

#### 5.3.3.1. *Intuitive and responsive making.*

Research links: Clothing shapes and using proportion. Practicality and function. Difference, pride and joy (section 4.4). Clothing archives (section 4.2).

My method of Responsive Making embraces chance and intuitive connection between designer-maker to fabric and garment and was generated by the square cut proportional exploration (section 5.3.1.). The method of planned changes and rules meant a relinquishment of control for the designer-maker, and a requirement for responding intuitively to the scale and proportion of the garment pieces when sewing. Chance methods such as this can promote newness (Csikszentmihaly, 1997; McQuillan, 2011). McQuillan (2011) works experimentally, with new cutting techniques for zero waste. An ethos for freethinking in design links our methods. My Responsive Making method is however unique because relinquishment of control relies on the maker's intuition for how to construct the separate pieces, and a respect for the *will* of those pieces. In this sense the method is underpinned by the post-human theory of intra-action, which places fabric and garment in a place of agency hierarchically equal to that of the designer-maker. The practice is therefore a collaboration. Work in the field with which I can make the most parallels is that of Bugg (2006), which is grounded in similar methods, such as concept led rather than trend led garment development, iterative design processes and qualitative data analysis. Bugg (2006) specifies experiential, haptic and tacit knowledge as key to the process; similarly, Almond (2013) highlights the importance of intuitiveness within the making process as a form of enquiry. Working directly with the final fabric is a strand of this method, which removes the control of toiling and additionally as noted by McQuillan (2011), addresses continuous waste which can be associated with fashion design methods. The use of surplus, re-purposed or donated fabrics in the practice (below) is associated with this method in the use of

intuition when working with the properties of fabrics and feeling the way through the make. Working intuitively may produce haphazard results. In fashion design and making, uniformity and planning are the norm, however here value is in mistakes, and beauty in the unexpected or the seemingly ugly (Wilson 2005). Responsive Making will be used to translate my intricate knowledge of the participant's needs into explorative ideas for garments, using tacitly applied ideas and embracing the haphazard.

#### *5.3.3.2. Surplus re-purposed fabric or donated.*

Research links: Practicality and function. Difference, pride and joy (section 4.4).

Garments are made from donated or surplus, re-purposed fabrics; working with available fabrics which offer properties suited to each particular piece of work, and addressing my overarching principle of waste minimisation; also see intuitive and responsive making above.

#### *5.3.3.3. Haphazard tucks.*

Research links: Clothing shapes and using proportion. Practicality and function. Comfort. The body. Difference pride and joy (section 4.4). Clothing archives (section 4.2).

The method originates from observation of the impact of storage on shirts in the archive at Platt Hall, Manchester, in section 4.2.1. It recreates the effect of how shirts stored in archival boxes become compressed and is applied to gathering in the square cut construction.

Haphazard tucks are created by pressing in gathers as creases as they fall naturally with the properties of the fabric, and sewing the creases in as *tucks* using a lockstitch (straight stitch) sewn close to the edge, as in figure 5.3.7. This method is a solution for the management of volume at the point of gathering around the neck, which can seem extreme, feminine and flouncy around the face. The volume in the body of the garment is wanted, and is maintained by the natural taper of the haphazard tuck as it travels away from the point of gathering. Similarly, Lindqvist (2015, 2016) uses drape lines, to denote how the fabric wishes to hang and these lines be for garment development. By accepting the fabric's compressed storage properties dictate structure of the garment.



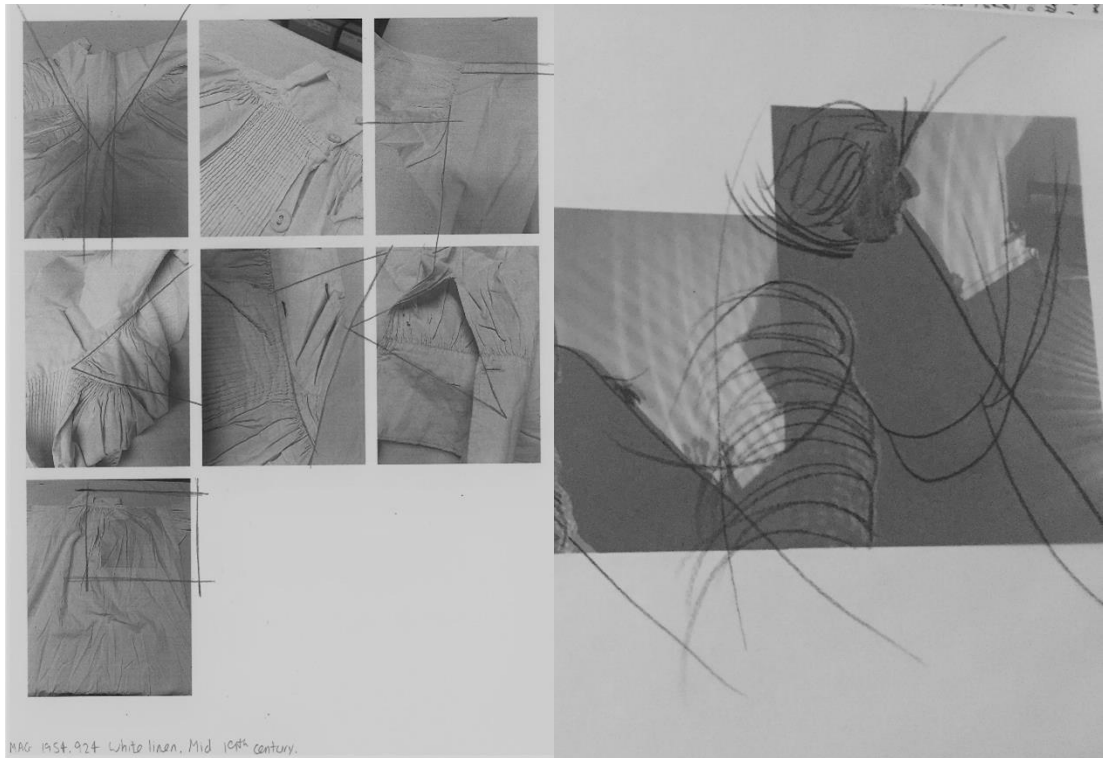
*Figure 5.3.7. Haphazard tucks.*

The 'compression' of the shirt creates a new design concept one of which embraces the acceptance of chance. This design method relinquishes control and creates new shapes and silhouettes. Necessary functional construction is accepted, despite a lack of formal beauty, normalcy or immaculacy.

#### 5.3.3.4. Sketching Over Images

Research links: Clothing shapes and using proportion (section 4.4). Clothing archives (section 4.2).

The technique of Sketching Over Images highlights shapes in research imagery (practice journal). This is a method established within my personal practice, and is a quick and responsive method for shape identification, for initial ideas. Some lines clearly originate in the image detail, such as shapes made by clothing in archival research as in figure 5.3.8. When working on the participant photographs, this method additionally described individuals through knowledge of them via the research process. This is reflected in the way the sketching appears in figure 5.3.9 in exuberant swirls for the expressive image.



*Figure 5.3.8. Sketching over the image, garment details.*

*Figure 5.3.9. Sketching over the image, describing the individual.*

#### 5.3.4. Body, garment and size.

##### 5.3.4.1. Space, shape, proportion and scale.

Research links: Gender stereotypes. Sexualisation and modesty. Clothing shapes and using proportion. Practicality and function. Comfort. The gendering of clothing. The body. Difference, pride and joy. Carrying it off (section 4.4). Clothing archives and Pit brow archives (section 4.2). Photographic pilot study (section 4.3).

Space, shape, proportion and scale are used within my practice as ways to provide wellbeing by covering the body and putting physical space between body and garment. This method addresses the physical and psychological comfort of the women, or *feeling right* in clothing, by developing garments that do not restrict the body or reveal the skin (section 2.4.3). Space offers wear qualities such as free movement, function, non-sexualising and feeling smaller in the clothing. Some garments are developed to a large size, not seeking to 'fit' the body, and some are smaller, still offering space through boxy and simple shapes. The balance between shape and space is explored through the application of gussets and the haphazard tucks technique.

Proportion, as the relationship of one thing to another, is considered when working on large or boxy shapes, and how a garment could look visually different worn on different shaped and sized bodies. Proportion was a key issue for all women, as clothing was a method for addressing body issues, or making interesting outfits through use of shape and proportion. Lindqvist (2015) considers the moving body within garments, similarly this work aims to allow the women space to move and function. The body in clothing makes links to the photographic pilot study, and how the body brings context to clothing in section 4.3. The provision of space is linked to the shape and size of the body; it is the association between shape of the body and the garment that enables a fluid space. Adjustable garments can offer control of shape and size, such as garments pulled in or left loose.

#### *5.3.4.2. Adjustment.*

Research links: Gender stereotypes. Sexualisation and modesty. Clothing shapes and using proportion. Practicality and function. Comfort. The gendering of clothing. The body. Difference, pride and joy. Carrying it off (section 4.4). Clothing and Pit brow archives (section 4.2). Photographic pilot study (section 4.3). The square cut shirt proportional exploration.

Adjustment is defined here as any means of manipulating a garment to fit as desired, and incorporates *adaptable* garments. New ideas have been developed by referring to the historical adjustment solutions fieldwork in section 4.2. By using the functional straps and metal hardware for drawing excess fabric to the body. Equally valuable are clothing manipulation methods associated with the Pit Brow women; crumpling and creasing of clothing around the body, rolling hems and sleeves and hitching skirts. Adjustments were introduced into my design thought process, and included making garments large enough for layering to take place.



#### 5.4. Practice outcomes, a practical response.

##### 5.4.1. Overview

The practice is a Response Making process of constructing a series of garments answering women's gender related preferences; experimental design approaches were extracted from the practice and are posited as methods (section 5.3). As shown in figure 5.4.2, the practice follows strands of design thinking, these are starting points, and although separated for clarity in the model and for documentation they form one thought process.

The practice outcomes are itemised in the table below as 'final response' and 'supporting work' (table 5.4.1) and are documented in the subsequent sub-sections under headings corresponding to the practice model (figure 5.4.2). The methods associated with each strand are listed clearly under the heading as *methods*, along with direction to the corresponding *practice journal pages*, which provide insights into design developments. Where the square cut process is applied to trousers and the boiler suit, this is an extension of the intrinsic square cutting process, and is explained below

Itemised practice outcomes; final response and supporting work.	
Final response: Seven finished full-scale garments in final fabrics.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mandarin shirt</li><li>• Mandarin worker shirt</li><li>• Sleeveless voluminous shirt</li><li>• Stripe square shirt</li><li>• Stripe dress shirt</li><li>• Hitch square trouser</li><li>• Black square boiler suit.</li></ul>	
Supporting work	
Square cut explorations	One half scale square cut shirt One full scale square cut shirt Ten half scale proportionally altered square cut shirts
Developments in half scale	One half scale mandarin shirt Two half scale pairs of square trousers
Developments in full scale	One full scale pair of square trousers One full scale boiler suit.

Table 5.4.1. Practice outcomes itemised as final response and supporting work.

in strands three and four. Links indicate interrelations between practice outcomes, and where techniques or features connect between garments.

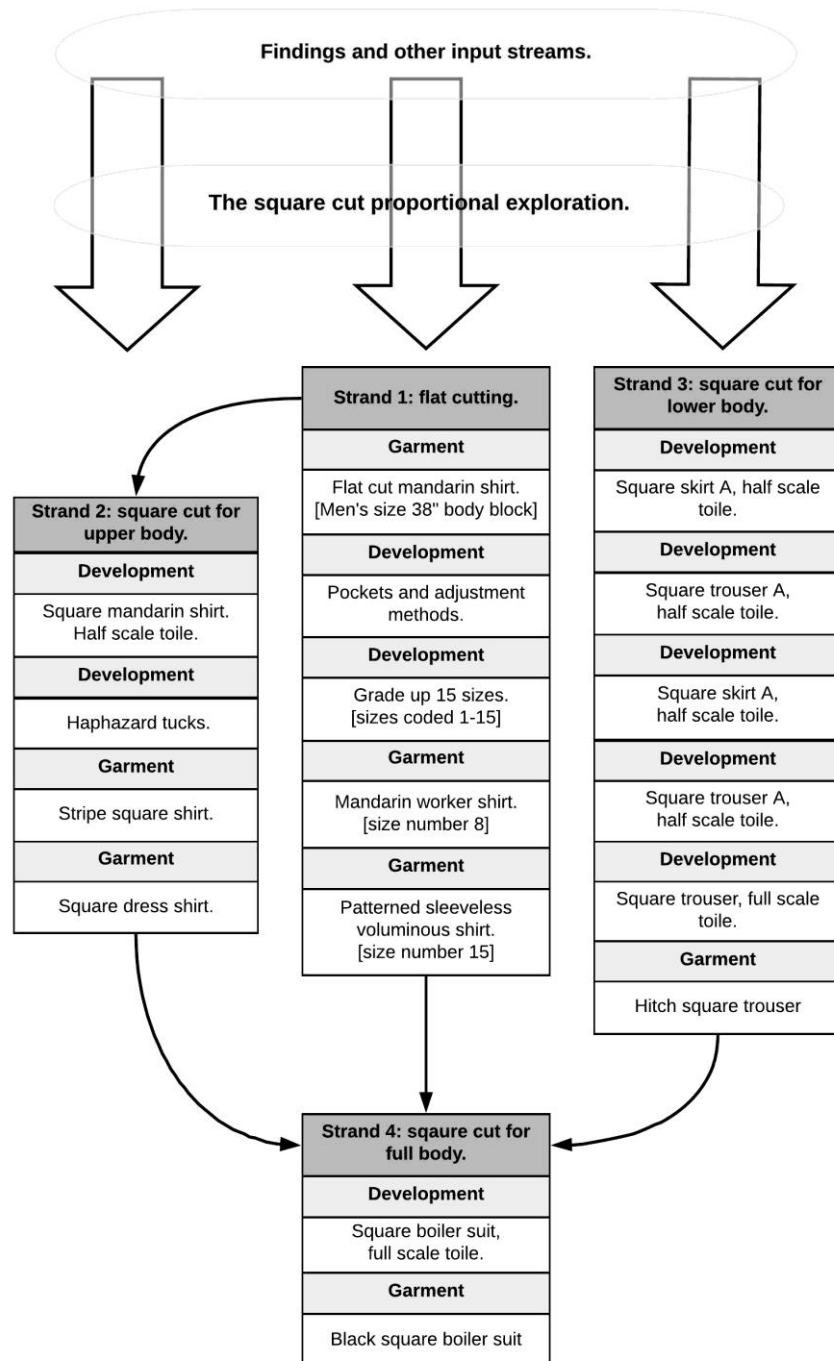


Figure 5.4.2. Practice model, showing final garments and developments.

#### 5.4.1.1. Notes on the Intuitive and Responsive Making Practice Process.

When working in full scale, garment development is a process of reviewing and responding whilst intuitively working on the garment; there is no 'final make' as is common with garment design process. Where full-scale garments are made during this study, and are not presented within the final response, they remain integral to the process; I rarely produce a full-scale toile that could not be worn.

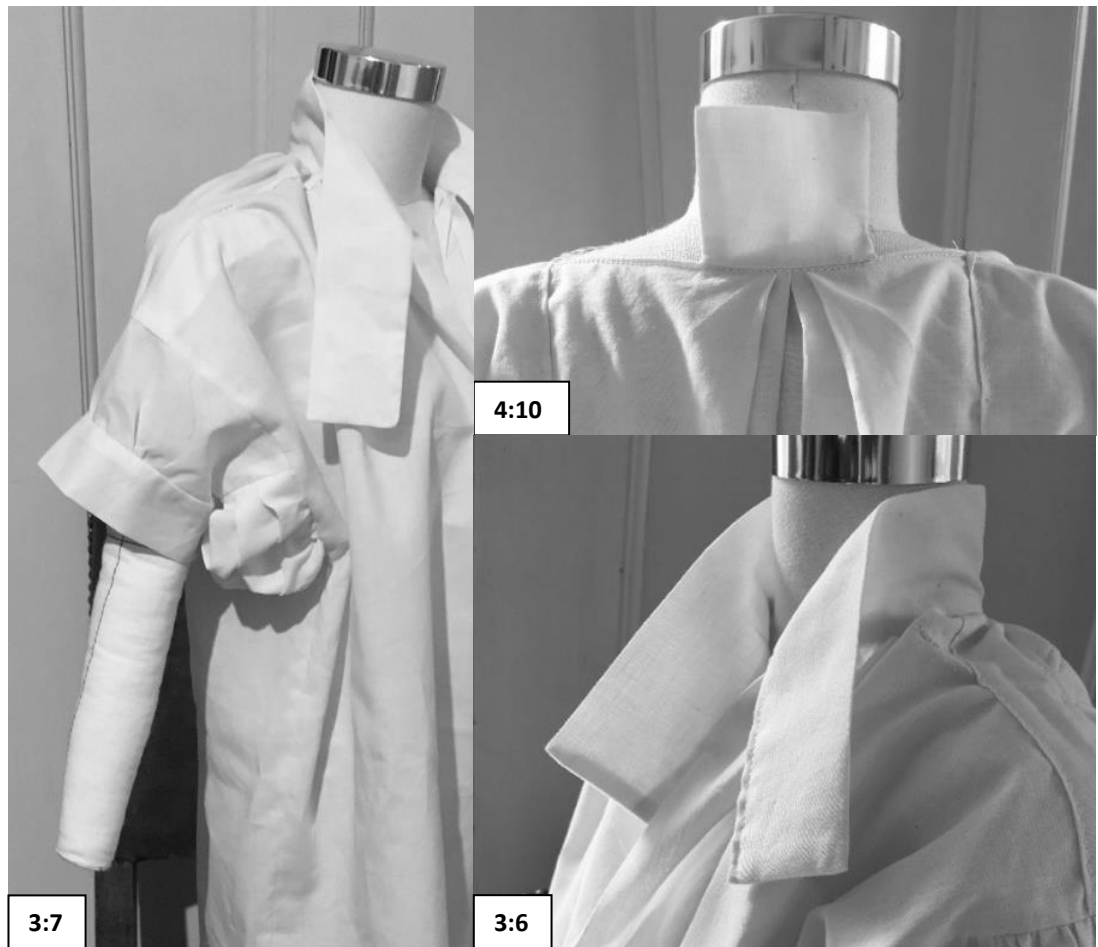
I view the group of women as clients, throughout this study, I have investigated who they are, what they do, how they feel. This work responds to their preferences, by acknowledging what is known, and offering challenges by providing newness and difference in shape and construction.

#### 5.4.2. The Square Cut Proportional Exploration.

Changing the traditional proportions of the Victorian square cut shirt to test how garment proportions can influence perceptions of gender. Note: shirt numbering corresponds with table 5.3.2 above, showing the planned changes.

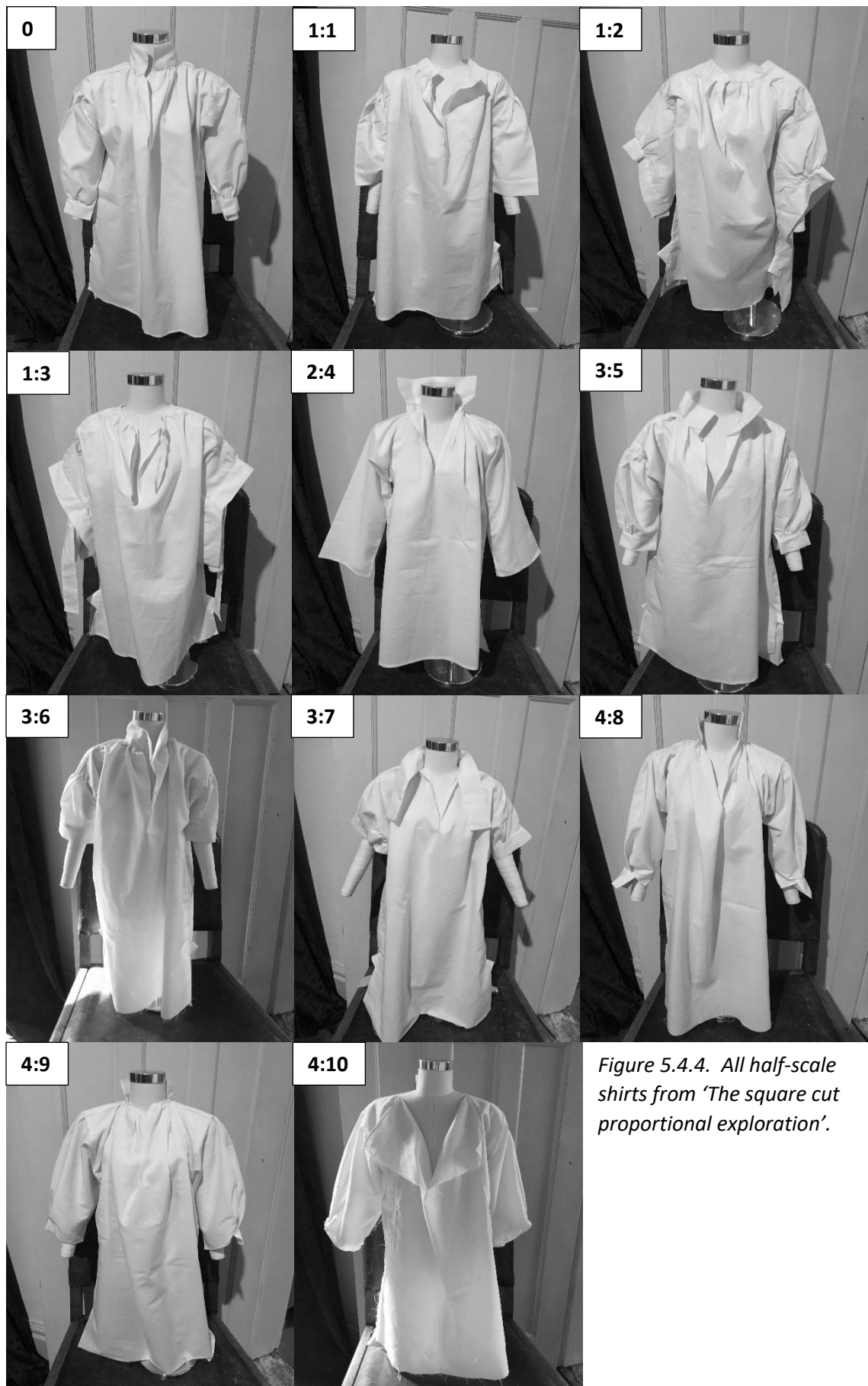
Methods: The square cut proportional exploration. Reinforcement. Layers, opacity, translucency. Box pleats. Intuitive and responsive making. Haphazard tucks. Sketching over the image. Space, shape, proportion and scale.

The experimental design approach was intuitive and responsive. Working to the pre-planned changes (section 5.3.1), my intuitive design thinking was central to the method. Originally, I intended to be the construction method as directed in Shep and Cariou (1999). When the proportions of the pieces made this impossible, I developed my own intuitive and responsive methods of design and garment construction. It was necessary to construct for *best fit* whilst reacting to my intuition for how to join the pieces for *best aesthetic effect*; using techniques such as gathering and pleating. In some shirts, the planned changes resulted in an entire switch in conventional proportion (figure 5.4.3). For example, on 4:10 the collar becomes a tab at the back of the neck, on 3:6, I allowed the long collar to extend beyond the neckline, rather than elongating the gathering. On Shirt 3:7 the rectangle for the sleeve is smaller than is traditional, I had to pleat and manipulate the sleeve gusset to fit. The resulting aesthetics are very different and I



*Figure 5.4.3 Constructional changes made for proportional alterations.*

found this fascinating; underarm bulk however, is not functional, could restrict arm movement and feel uncomfortable and was therefore viewed as impractical. Responsive and intuitive making (section 5.3.3) instigated constant review of construction techniques in real time during making, producing interesting results. Figure 5.4.4, shows all half-scale shirt experiments, including Shep and Cariou's (1999) originally proportioned shirt, represented as shirt zero.



*Figure 5.4.4. All half-scale shirts from 'The square cut proportional exploration'.*

#### 5.4.2.1. Exhibition: provoking discourse

To provoke discourse on how proportion influences the way garments are perceived as gendered, the shirts 1:1 to 1:4 were exhibited along with a half and full-scale square cut shirt, Shep and Cariou (1999). Conversation with delegates and visitors provided informal feedback. Comments referred only to femininity, people found that profuse gathering (1:3) or narrowness in the body (shirt 2:4) made a garment more feminine (figure 5.4.5): feminine was easily identifiable. Small [narrow] is stereotypically more feminine (section 2.2.1), and in the participant enquiry masculine clothing was considered to be larger. One person noted that more ‘things on it’, such as straps that do not have a purpose, made it more feminine (shirt 1:3); non-functional as feminine was additionally reflected in the participant enquiry (section 4.4).



Figure 5.4.5 Features identified as feminine.

Changing the traditional proportions of the Victorian square cut shirt found that feminine proportion to be narrowness and small; non-functional was feminine, and was defined as things hanging off the shirt. Similarly, Isabelle described feminine womenswear as having ‘things on things’ (section 4.4.2.6), and therefore feminine adages are thought of as decorative and non-functional. Moreover, changing the proportion of the square and rectangular garment pieces resulted in new intuitive ways to construct, as a solution for joining shapes with mismatched dimensions.

#### 5.4.3. Strand 1. Flat cutting.

Methods: The square cut proportional exploration. Reinforcement. Layers, opacity, translucency. Hanging loops and Pockets. Box pleats. Intuitive and responsive making. Haphazard tucks. Sketching over the image. Surplus, re-purposed fabric or donated. Space, shape, proportion and scale. Adjustment.

Practice journal pages 1-15.

I wanted to begin by working with a shape familiar to the women who wear men's clothing. Menswear blocks are patterns used to make men's garments, and they were an obvious starting point. My aim was to apply the binder technique from the square cut process to this boxy shape, to create a simple shirt with visible unapologetic construction. I began by drafting the men's body and sleeve block from Kershaw (2013) size 38", a simple boxy shape, not fitted to the body with long sleeves.

##### *5.4.3.1. Garment: Mandarin shirt.*

This basic shirt was drafted with the characteristics of the square cut shirt, but cut with flat pattern cutting shape and proportions in the body and sleeve patterns. The pattern is used in its basic form for this shirt; it formed a shell onto which I added layers of development. A shirt often has a yoke, which eliminates the shoulder seam, however here I sewed a binder on the inside to emulate the square cut shirt visible construction. The binder covers the raw edges of the shoulder seam, concealing, reinforcing, and making the inside of the garment neat and comfortable to wear. For additional comfort, and practicality to avoid fraying, French seams enclose the raw edges and were used on visible seams (figure 5.4.6). The aim was to emphasise function and utility. The shirt is made out of an old polyester and cotton mix bed sheet. The fabric is light and so does not drape to the body, but sits off and these properties mean it rolls and crumples easily, at the sleeve. The sheet has a good level of translucency. I wanted the construction to be visible through the fabric, so that layers in the construction could be seen, creating variation in density. Also, to make the garment adaptable, when the appearance can be changed by layering over other garments (figure 5.4.6) (practice journal, 00).



*Figure 5.4.6. Mandarin shirt showing, French seaming, construction and layering.*

#### *5.4.3.2. Development. Pockets, adjustment methods and mixed fabrics.*

Pockets provided storage, on the inside and the outside of the shirt, as layers of function. The inner pocket was deliberately offset, to create an engaging aesthetic on the outside of the garment, as the stripes showed through. Figure 5.4.7 shows how the internal stripe fabric pocket is visible through the shirt. The sleeves felt soft and loose without cuffs in this lightweight fabric, and I wanted to reproduce the rolled sleeves and soft crumples and creases seen in the pit brow images (practice journal). Therefore, I did not add cuffs, but added an adjustable method to secure the rolled sleeve.



*Figure 5.4.7. Mandarin shirt showing, internal construction and sleeve adjustment.*



#### 5.4.3.3. Garment. Mandarin worker shirt.

The same sleeve treatment is applied to the *mandarin worker shirt* (figure 5.4.8) The differing tones of black and the surface characteristics of the fabrics adds subtle difference in this garment. The fabrics qualities differ, the batiste is lightweight in a similar way to the sheet fabric, and thus the sleeves feel weightless compared to the wool body. This mix up of fabric types draws attention to the construction of the garment visually through the density, and in tactile ways because the body hangs fluidly over the body, whereas the sleeves stand off the arm. Black was popular for the women, is associated with menswear and I wanted to offer a basic style for layering.

This shirt is made 7 sizes bigger than the original mandarin shirt. I wanted to experiment with how increasing the size affected a garment's appeal. I used Kershaw (2013), and graded the mandarin shirt body and sleeve size 38" up by 15 sizes; the sizes are numbered 1-15, with 1 being the original 38". The purpose of grading is to increase or decrease a pattern size, whilst maintaining the proportions. I wanted to utilise the play on volume and proportion explored in the Square Cut Process.

#### 5.4.3.4. Garment. Patterned sleeveless voluminous shirt.

When developing this final flat cut mandarin shirt I was influenced by Jessica, who commented that in t-shirts with cut off sleeves, where the arm, side-body and bra is



Figure 5.4.8. Mandarin worker shirt, rolled sleeve detail.



Figure 5.4.9. Sleeveless shirt, showing deep armhole and volume on the body.

revealed by, she would not feel sexualised (section 4.4). In response, I wanted to test if a garment that was similarly revealing, would be chosen by the women. I aimed to juxtapose revealing, with considerable volume in the body (size number 15) to test whether this would make the garment acceptable (figure 5.4.9).

#### 5.4.4. Strand 2. Square cut for upper body.

Methods: The square cut proportional exploration. Reinforcement. Layers, opacity, translucency. Hanging loops and Pockets. Box pleats. Over-sewn stitching. Intuitive and responsive making. Haphazard tucks. Sketching over the image. Surplus, re-purposed fabric or donated. Space, shape, proportion and scale. Adjustment.

Practice journal pages 10-20

This strand makes links with strand one by focusing on space, function, and adaptability. It aims to build on these themes using the Square Cut Shirt as a starting point for the development of innovative garments that maintain volume and space around the body, whilst managing impractical bulk.

##### 5.4.4.1. Development. Square mandarin shirt in half scale. Haphazard tucks.

The toile is a half scale square cut shirt. The shortened length enhanced the impact of volume created by gathering at the neck, encouraging the shirt to project away from the body, skimming the hips (figure 5.4.10). This way a pleasing shape that stood off the body, it responded to the participant preference for loose garments, and garments which sit over the body and may balance body shape such as larger hips.



*Figure 5.4.10. Square mandarin shirt, showing volume and shape created by gathering.*



*Figure 5.4.11. Square mandarin shirt, showing haphazard tucks.*

To suppress cumbersome volume at the neck, but retain volume at the hem, gathers were constrained using the haphazard tuck technique (section 5.3.3) at the front and back neck, (figure 5.4.11). Volume at the neck became needless when options for making it more functional were found; complex detailing around the face can also seem feminine.

#### *5.4.4.2. Garment. Stripe square shirt.*

This garment is based on the half scale square cut toile shown above. Carefully considered design features bring sharpness and simplicity. At the back neck an inverted box pleat replaces gathers with neat simplicity; a wide hanging loop brings function and with the formal collar, these details make links to shirts designed for men. There is space between body and garment, as the fabric hangs from the shoulders, skimming the hips (figure 5.4.12).



*Figure 5.4.12. Stripe square shirt, pocket with over-sewing, details, back neck detail and fit on the body.*

The use of pocket placement was intuitive, as I experimented with pinning pockets on, testing plain pockets in unbleached batiste and pockets with stripes running horizontally and vertically. Pockets placed in the chest pocket position over both breasts looked oddly sexualised, even on this loose shirt. The haphazard tucks technique skewed the stripe of the fabric, creating illusions of the pockets not sitting straight; I placed the pockets by eye, working intuitively. Pocket stripes do not align therefore, with those on the body of the garment, which is standard process for a shirt; pockets are over-sewn (Figure 5.4.12). This intuitive design method development makes links to haphazard, and enhances the concept within the garment. The flat sewn sleeve and shoulder straps make the shoulder and arm area neat and precise, creating juxtaposition with the haphazard construction features.

#### *5.4.4.3. Garment. Square dress shirt.*

The dress shirt is inspired by Eva W, who noted how the shirtdress can bring function to womenswear (section 4.4). This garment begins with a lengthened version of the stripe square shirt. I worked to develop a garment that merges menswear practicalities with some innovation and fun from womenswear.

The style took on a functional, work wear look; the large front double hand pocket is practical, and it inspired by work wear aprons. At the centre front a band of fabric secures base of the front placket (fastening), the top of the pocket, and the side adjustment straps. This reinforces and neatens, the overall look is functional, not cluttered. I wanted to balance the use of functional straps, with notions of feminine and non-functional identified in the literature review, participant enquiry and the square cut proportional exploration; see figure 5.4.4. The Responsive design technique enabled me to make intuitive decisions for how to combine the shirt and straps. I used a combination of long fabric straps and d-rings to offer levels of adjustment and control.

I sought to increase suitability for different occasions or variety in styling. When not drawn in, the garment is voluminous and fun, it offers space between the body and the garment. A lightweight shirting fabric may engender feelings of freedom and enjoyment in wear. I added double cuffs with cuff link holes, as commonly seen on dress shirts,





*Figure 5.4.13. Square dress shirt, showing adjustment solutions, double cuff and finishing.*

these can be rolled, left loose, worn with cuff links; they are adaptable and make styling and wearing fun (figure 5.4.13).

5.4.5. Strand 3. Square cut for the lower body.

Methods: The square cut proportional exploration. Reinforcement. Hanging loops and Pockets. Over-sewn stitching. Intuitive and responsive making. Sketching over the image. Surplus, re-purposed fabric or donated. Space, shape, proportion and scale. Adjustment.

Numerous development stages preceded the final garment for this strand; these are documented in the practice journal, pages 15-25.

Strand three uses the premise of the square cut shirt process to develop garments for the lower body. Where space created within gathers was compressed in strand two, here deep gathering is an adjustment solution for drawing in at the waist.

*5.4.5.1. Garment. Hitch square trouser.*

This style makes strong reference to the Pit Brow Women, for example in the hang of the trouser with its angular leg hems, shaped by the stiff tan wool suiting. The large front pocket repurposed jeans denim and is designed with a gusset, to crumple not sit flat. Inspiration for the hitch pocket came from the hitched skirt of the Pit Brow Women, also vintage work wear and the practical needs of women participants working in practical arts. The mismatched fabrics highlight the construction features, and give the garment a look of being adapted to suit a purpose as with the Pit Brow work wear (figure 5.4.14).

Sewn-over stitching is used on the pockets and is light in colour referencing the contrast stitching of some work wear styles. Rectangular patch pockets reflect the boxy square shape of the trouser and are large size and functional. Large back pockets are placed low, hanging off and exacerbating the voluminous drape of the trouser in the slouch of the pocket (figure 5.4.15).

The deep crotch depth and wide diamond shaped gusset adds space to this flat square garment (figure 5.4.16). Webbing threaded through a channel, draws the waist in. The fullness can be moved around the waistband to create space in different places which may create opportunity for ways to enhance or disguise the body, or to experiment with shapes on the body





*Figure 5.4.14. Hitch square trouser, hang of trouser and hitch pocket construction.*



*Figure 5.4.15. Hitch square trouser, pockets and over-sewing of pockets.*



*Figure 5.4.16. Hitch square trouser, flat construction and space created by gusset.*

5.4.6. Strand 4. Square cut for the full body.

Methods: The square cut proportional exploration. Reinforcement. Layers, opacity, translucency. Hanging loops and Pockets. Box pleats. Over-sewn stitching. Intuitive and responsive making. Haphazard tucks. Sketching over the image. Surplus, re-purposed fabric or donated. Space, shape, proportion and scale.

Practice journal pages 20-30.

Square garments for the full body were developed by merging the square cut shirt (strand 2) and the square trouser (strand three).

*5.4.6.1. Development: square boiler suit.*

This development garment was constructed with gathers at the front neck and an inverted box pleat combination at the back. Combined with the lightweight cotton fabric these features gave the boiler suit a casual streetwear look. (figure 5.4.17). The sleeve was lengthened to extend onto the hand, as this responded to the women's preference for feelings of comfort in wear (section 4.4). The armhole was made deeper enabling the sleeve to be inserted without gathers, this was neater than the original square cut shirt, and enabled free movement; a single depth cuff finished the sleeve. The half opening of the original shirt, stops at mid-chest, I extended it to sit much lower, enabling access to the boiler suit; a wide placket was set in.



*Figure 5.4.17. Square boiler suit, development garment.*

I sought to ensure that the garment had ample space for free movement. Space around the body was tested by moving my body, specifically squatting and moving my arms over



my head to check for restriction. Freedom of movement, linked to comfort and coverage was a key issue for the participant group (figure 5.4.18).



*Figure 5.4.18. Square boiler suit. Testing space and freedom to move.*

#### *5.4.6.2. Garment. Black square boiler suit.*

Subtle changes made to this boiler suit make it smarter than the development garment; haphazard tucks at the front neck, a neat box pleat at the back neck and simple smaller press fasteners. Fabric choice has certainly influenced the overall smarter style, and this is interesting in terms of how different preferences could be satisfied by changing fabric type (figure 5.4.19). The main fabric is a lightweight wool that drapes well, but does not cling to the body. This piece responds to the women's requirement for comfort, coverage, and the interest in experimenting with shapes and scale on the body, and the juxtaposition of the female body with the voluminous cover all shape (figure 5.4.20). Cotton batiste is a fine woven fabric and is used for details, and particularly on pockets and gussets it subtly adds textural and density difference, which can be seen well using light (figure 5.4.21).



Figure 5.4.19. Black square boiler suit. Finish detail including haphazard tucks.



Figure 5.4.20. Black square boiler suit. Fit and shape.



Figure 5.4.21. Black square boiler suit. Fabric combinations in the light.

## 5.5. Feedback on practice outcomes.

### 5.5.1. Overview.

Participants were asked to provide feedback, initially by face-to-face viewings, however, participant schedules yielded low uptake, and thus, online surveys were devised. The participant feedback addresses the objectives as justified in table 5.5.1.

Objectives addressed by the participant feedback on the practice outcomes.	
Objective	Justification
2. To analyse how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources	To use responses about the gendered perception of the garments to analyse how gender is assigned in clothing.
3. To critically analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.	To use responses, in conjunction with the qualities of men's clothing to analyse why women choose to wear male gendered clothing.
4. To develop a conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image.	To use the responses to the practice outcomes to assess the success of the garments, which will inform the conceptual model.
6. To evaluate the experimental design approach as a model for the development of clothing for women.	To use the responses as a method of evaluating the success of the design approach.

*Table 5.5.1. Objective addressed by the participant feedback on the practice outcomes.*

For both feedback types, the aim was to find out if the women liked the garments and why, by asking them which garments they would select to try on and why, how they would style them, and if they would wear them. In face-to face feedback women had the advantage of seeing, and trying on the clothing. The online feedback additionally asked for a favourite garment choice, and about the gendered perception of the garments on and off the body (explained below). The garments were numbered enabling participants to reference them easily; figure 5.5.2 shows the numbering system alongside examples of the images used in the online feedback.





*Figure 5.5.2. Garments numbered for the requirements of the feedback process.*

### 5.5.2. Participant feedback method.

#### 5.5.2.1. Face-to-face viewing.

Each woman had a separate appointment; the scanner room at Manchester Fashion Institute was used, having changing cubicles and mirrors. The garments were hung on a rail, and each woman was asked to select their preferred garments, and complete a feedback sheet about each one. Questions from the feedback sheet are shown in table 5.5.3. They covered the topics summarised above, asking for succinct answers; to minimise participant time and to keep data specific at this stage of the research. The participants were allowed to complete the feedback process without input from the researcher, to avoid influencing choice. They could freely handle the garments and try them on if they wished; participants wearing the garments were photographed by the researcher. This method acknowledges the practice-based research of Bugg (2009); Bugg describes how the qualitative method of participant feedback for experimental clothing development ‘allows for deeper investigation of emotional and experiential elements’ (2009: 21). The feedback at the end of the process will enable review in this case, and suggest direction for future work.

One sheet for each garment selected. No limit to number of allowable selections.

When describing your experience with the garments, please think about your interview and the points we discussed if possible. Please answer briefly; bullet points are fine.

- Garment number:
- 1 - Why did you select it?
- 2 - If you tried it on, please describe your experience. For example, how it looks/feels on your body.
- 3 - Do you think this garment is something you would wear? Please explain why. If you would not wear it, please explain why.
- 3 - Please describe briefly how you would style it. What would you wear it with?
- 4 - Other comments.

*Table 5.5.3. Face-to-face feedback questions, taken from the feedback sheet.*

#### 5.5.2.2. Online feedback surveys.

Questions covered the same topics as in table 5.5.3, but additionally included a favourite garment survey (table 5.5.4). Specifically for the online surveys, pre-set preferences were added, enabling the participants to say why they selected garments. Preferences were extracted from the participant enquiry themes. This was done to check the validity of these as for application to the conceptual model.

Questions about the gendered perception of the garments on and off the body were added (table 5.5.4). This was in continuation of findings from the photographic pilot study (sections 3.3, 4.3) and similar questions in the participant interviews (sections 3.4, 4.4). The aim of this final round of questioning on this topic was to synthesise findings from the previous investigations.

Seven separate surveys were created using Typeform and shared by email; one for each garment (quantitative) and one about the favourite garment (qualitative). A Dropbox file of images was distributed by email; four *on the body* and four *off the body* images were provided for each garment (figure 5.5.2 shows a selection). The participants could view these whilst answering the questions; this was important, as most had not seen the garments first hand.

A separate survey for each garment (1-7) with these questions for each.

- 1 - What is your gendered perception of garment 1 off the body?  
Men's. Women's. Non-gendered.
- 2 - What is your gendered perception of garment 1 on a body?  
Men's. Women's. Non-gendered.
- 3 - Do you perceive garment 1 differently in terms of gender association, when it is on a body? Y/N
- 4 - Looking at garment 1. Would you select it to try on when shopping? Y/N
- 5 - Why did you choose it? Please select all that motivated your choice.

Shape/cut. Size/scale. Body covered. Skin showing. Functional. Practical. Colour. Different. Basic. More fitted. Looks comfortable/loose fit. Masculine. Feminine. Non-gendered.

One favourite garment survey.

When answering these questions, please think about your interview and the points we discussed if possible. Please answer briefly; bullet points are fine.

- Which is your favourite garment? 1-7
- Please describe briefly, why you chose the garment.
- How would you style the garment? What would you wear it with?

*Table 5.5.4. Online feedback questions.*

### 5.5.3. Results.

The face-to face feedback achieved 30% uptake and the online surveys 70%. The results are summarised below, and discussed in the section conclusion. Tables' 5.5.8-5.5.14 (at the end of the section) provide full results and are referenced throughout.

The section *comments on wearing*, utilises the strengths of the face-to-face feedback in the provision of experiential insights into wear qualities and notes on fit. Unless stated, all other sections address data from the online surveys only, as they captured responses from a greater portion of the group and offer a more comprehensive review.

#### 5.5.3.1. Gendered perception of clothing on and off the body.

Table 5.5.5 summarises gendered perceptions of the garments, when viewed *on* and off the body. This abridged result shows perception was somewhat clearer for the group when the garment was *on a body*. The black square boiler suit was most significantly identified as non-gendered with 71% off the body and 100% on the body, the remaining percentage for off the body was situated in menswear, thus no participant found this garment to look like womenswear. An interesting result is for the dress shirt, which was narrowly perceived as non- gendered off the body (42% womenswear, 57% non-gendered), yet on the body it was decisively womenswear (71%) and was the only garment perceived as womenswear on the body.

Online surveys: Summarising the gendered perception of the group of garments.		
Images viewed	Womenswear, menswear or non-gendered.	Majority result
Off the body	5 garments non-gendered. 1 garment womenswear. 1 garment split between women's/men's.	Non-gendered.
On the body	6 garments non-gendered. 1 garment womenswear.	Non-gendered.
Do you perceive the garment differently in terms of gender when it is on a body?	6 garments - no. 2 garment - yes.	The gendered perception is clear.

*Table 5.5.5. Summarising the gendered perception of the garments as a group.*

#### 5.5.3.2. Favourite garment.

The favourite garment was a single selection survey; therefore the result is specific (table 5.5.12). The mandarin shirt as the smallest fit and the sleeveless voluminous mandarin shirt as the most revealing were not chosen. The two black, boxy shaped garments were chosen, these were the mandarin worker shirt and the black square boiler suit and were two of the simplest garments. The responses regarding choice justification use terms correlating with the selected preferences on table 5.5.7 (below), for example, *Loose fitting, practical without being tight and uncomfortable*. The most mentioned where shape, comfort, colour (black, stripes), and difference, practical.

Number of respondents.	Favourite Garment	<i>Please describe briefly, why you chose the garment.</i>
2	2. Mandarin worker shirt.	Like black clothes as I feel it's more slimming and smart. It was masculine and I like a grandad collars. Good basic, can be styled up or down.
2	5. Square dress shirt.	I really like the fit and shape of this when it is fastened at the back. The stripes work really well and it is a really unique dress. It was between this and the cream mandarin shirt, which I also really liked. The mandarin shirt is the one that I would be mostly likely to wear as I think it would suit me best, but the dress is the one I actually like the best. Multifunctional and silhouette.
1	4. Stripe square shirt.	Loose fitting, practical without being tight and uncomfortable. Nice pattern/stripe.
1	6. Hitch square trouser.	Comfy, interesting shape, practical, would like them even more in black.
1	7. Black square boiler suit.	I love the colour and simplicity but it's unusual too in terms of cut. I like the amount of skin showing on leg, it feels feminine but still non-gendered. It looks adaptable to how feminine/masculine could be worn.

*Table 5.5.6. Online surveys. Favourite garment. Summarising reasons for selection.*

#### 5.5.3.3. Comments on wearing.

Face-to-face feedback provided valuable insights into the wear characteristics and fit of the garments tried on; these were the mandarin worker shirt, stripe square shirt, square dress shirt, black square boiler suit, and hitch square trouser (tables 5.5.8 and 5.5.9). The shape of the stripe square shirt was liked and was flattering, with the square boiler suit enjoyed for being oversized and also feeling nice to wear because of the fine fabric and freedom to move. Comfort was felt when wearing all garments. Interestingly, the square dress shirt, as the only garment perceived as womenswear, felt formal, and the hitch trouser designed with work wear in mind, felt practical. Suggestions for fit



improvement were to shorten the sleeves of the boiler suit and dress shirt, the stripe square shirt neck was a bit high, and one woman said of the boiler suit that she ‘would have liked a little more shape down sides (only a little)’. Photographs of the participants trying on, are in appendix C.

#### 5.5.3.4. Overview of garment selections and preferences.

In the online surveys all garments were selected as liked, at least once, as show in table 5.5.11. This survey allowed multiple garment selections, thus a broader view of preferences is recorded. The black clothing items were most popular, and black additionally was a suggestion for garment improvements as with the hitch trouser (table 5.5.6). The least selected garment, the sleeveless shirt, was included to somewhat test the participant preference for coverage (section 4.4 and 5.5.2); this finding may confirm that coverage is preferred.

The reasons for selection across the whole feedback process including face-to-face and online (tables 5.5.9, 5.5.11, and 5.5.13) are summarised below in table 5.5.7; preferences are ordered by the frequency in which they were selected. The aim was to use this as a list of the women’s priorities when selecting clothing, and as a basis for the conceptual model.

Face-to-face and online surveys: preferences identified through garment selection.		
Preferences in order of frequency of selection.		
Qualitative responses from predefined categories in online surveys (table 5.5.11).	Qualitative responses from online surveys (table 5.5.13).	Qualitative responses from face-to-face feedback (table 5.5.9).
1.Shape, cut 2.Comfortable, loose fit 3. Colour 4. Non gendered 5. Functional 6. Practical 7. Different 8. Size, scale 9. Basic 10. Body covered 11. Masculine 12. Feminine 13. Skin showing	1.Shape, cut 2.Colour (black and stripes) 3.Functional (adaptable, Multifunctional) 4.Different 5.Practical 6.Comfort 7.Basic 8.Masculine 9.Feminine 10. Non-gendered.	1.Shape, cut (loose, oversized, length) 2. Comfort 3.Functional (adaptable, pockets, drawstring waist) 4. Fabric. 5. Different 6. Colour (black and stripes) 7.Basic

*Table 5.5.7. Practice outcomes feedback. Summarising the preferences identified.*

5.5.3.5. A conceptual model: Women's clothing preferences. Wellbeing in relation to gender and body image.

Preferences for the conceptual model were generated through repeated questioning methods in a process of triangulation, as shown in sections 4.3, 4.4, and 5.5.3 above. In this way, this research was rigorous in continually checking and validating findings. Preferences reiterated through the process are considered secure in their representation of the participant group in relation to clothing gender and body image. Connections to wellbeing proposed in section 1.1 were validated by preferences of comfort in the final feedback above. Specifically, the preference for shape reinforces notions of comfort, in the sense that the garments chosen were all comfortable loose shapes. Loose clothing offering ample coverage was liked for providing comfort and space to move, making garments functional and practical. The conceptual model shown in figure 5.5.8 below, illustrates the interrelated connection between these 6 preferences. Preferences for difference and colour are changeable with occasion and specific to each woman. These are not interrelated and are represented accordingly in the model.

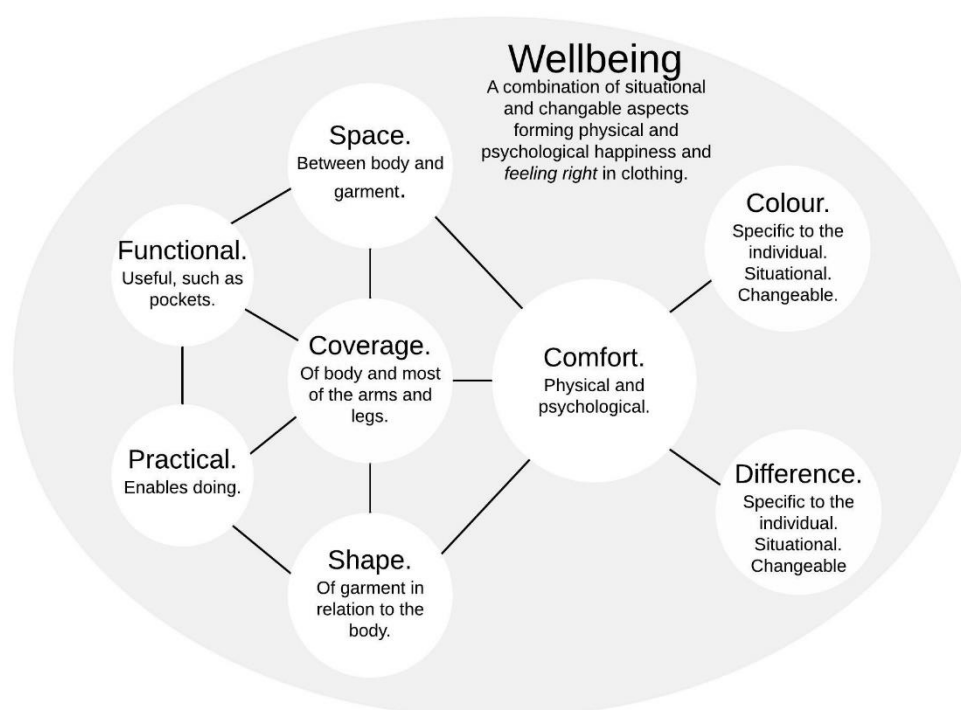


Table 5.5.8. Women's clothing preferences. Wellbeing in relation to gender and body image.

The impact of the implementation of this model, is the placement of the wearer at the heart of the design process, with wellbeing taking precedence. In this way the wearer is less a commodity or consumer, in the sense that they become viewed sensitively as an individual with unique agency, and in response the designer takes an intuitive approach to the task of garment design. The significance of this conceptual model as a catalyst for new approaches to design, and as an output of this PhD, is discussed further in the following conclusion on page 166 and in chapter 6.

Face-to-face feedback.							
Garments selected from the rail as 'Would you would select the garment to try on when shopping'							
Number of responses.	1. Mandarin shirt.	2. Mandarin worker shirt.	3. Sleeveless voluminous mandarin shirt	4. Stripe square shirt.	5. Square dress shirt.	6. Black square boiler suit.	7. Hitch square trouser
3		1		2	1	3	

*Table 5.5.9. Face-to-face feedback, 'Would you would select the garment to try on when shopping'*

2. Mandarin worker shirt: responses.				
Number of selections.	Choice motivation	In wear.	Would you wear it?	Styling.
1	Oversized Basics Can dress up or down	Nice fit. Good material.	Can be casual or formal.	Palazzo, culottes, wide leg trousers.
4. Stripe square shirt.				
2	Love fabric and cut of shirt. Loose and good length on me.	Fells comfy. Feels smart. Flattering shape	Yes, makes a change from me wearing t-shirts. Statement piece.	Nice jeans, doc sandals.
	Colour. Cut being boxy.	Really like the shape, feels comfortable. Neck was a tiny bit too high for myself.	Yes, casual wear plus can be dressed up.	With Mum jeans or cords and a duster kind of coat when not hot.
5. Square dress shirt: responses.				
1	Like length of dress and pockets.	Comfy, quite formal for me	Possibly with a different fabric and shorter sleeves.	Converse.
6. Black square boiler suit: responses.				
3	Like jumpsuits, boiler suits. Like colour.	Comfy, loose.	Yes, maybe just shorter sleeves.	As is. Converse. Doc sandals.
	Good Basic. Oversized. Pockets! Long.	Oversized. Good fabric.	Yes. One piece, don't need extra clothes i.e. trousers.	Leggings.
	Different to other jumpsuits. Colour	Feels nice as it is thin and room to move. Would have liked a little more shape down sides (only a little).	Yes, comfy looking and easy to style.	Black boots and keep it simple.
7. Hitch square trouser: responses.				
1	Baggy cropped style and drawstring waist.	Very comfy, practical.	Yes, in darker fabrics.	Cropped t-shirt, tucked in or out.

*Table 5.5.10. Face-to-face feedback. Qualitative responses from face-to-face feedback.*

Online feedback. Garments selected as 'Would you would select the garment to when try on when shopping'							
Number of respondents.	1. Mandarin shirt.	2. Mandarin worker shirt.	3. Sleeveless voluminous mandarin shirt	4. Stripe square shirt.	5. Square dress shirt.	6. Black square boiler suit.	7. Hitch square trouser
7	42%	71%	14%	42%	57%	71%	28%

Table 5.5.11. Online feedback. 'Would you would select the garment to when try on when shopping'

Why did you choose it? Please select all that motivated your choice.														
Garment	Number of selections	Shape, cut	Size, scale	Body covered	Skin showing	Functional	Practical	Colour	Different	Basic	Comfortable, loose fit	Masculine	Feminine	Non gendered
1	3	75%					25%	50%			25%			50%
2	5	50%	16%	16%		16%		50%		16%	66%	16%	16%	
3	1													100%
4	3	66%				33%		33%	66%	33%	66%			
5	4	100%	75%	25%	25%	75%	100%	50%	50%		75%	50%	50%	25%
6	5	80%	40%	60%	20%	40%	40%	100%	40%	60%	60%			
7	2	50%	50%			50%	50%		50%		100%			50%

Table 5.5.12. Online feedback. Qualitative responses from predefined categories in online surveys.

Online feedback. Which is your favourite garment?							
Responses	1. Mandarin shirt.	2. Mandarin worker shirt.	3. Sleeveless voluminous mandarin shirt	4. Stripe square shirt.	5. Square dress shirt.	6. Black square boiler suit.	7. Hitch square trouser
7	0%	28%	0%	14%	28%	14%	14%

Table 5.5.13. Online feedback. Which is your favourite garment?

Why did you choose the garment and how would you style it?			
Number of respondents.	Favourite Garment	Please describe briefly, why you chose the garment.	How would you style it? For example, what would you wear with it?
2	2. Mandarin worker shirt.	Like black clothes as I feel it's more slimming and smart. It was masculine and I like a grandad collars.	Jeans.
		Good basic, can be styled up or down.	Culottes/palazzos.
2	5. Square dress shirt.	I really like the fit and shape of this when it is fastened at the back. The stripes work really well and it is a really unique dress. It was between this and the cream mandarin shirt, which I also really liked. The mandarin shirt is the one that I would be mostly likely to wear as I think it would suit me best, but the dress is the one I actually like the best.	I would wear the dress with white trainers and silver jewellery. Probably silver hooped earrings. I have a silver worn leather clutch bag that I might wear with it. The cream shirt, I would wear with black jeans and leopard print boots with gold jewellery.
		Multifunctional and silhouette.	Trainers and the rest simple.
1	4. Stripe square shirt.	Loose fitting, practical without being tight and uncomfortable. Nice pattern/stripe.	Either Mom jeans for more casual or cords if I wanted to wear it too a meeting. With trainers or brogues.
1	6. Hitch square trouser.	Comfy, interesting shape, practical, would like them even more in black.	T-shirt/ vest if hot weather, sandals or trainers
1	7. Black square boiler suit.	I love the colour and simplicity but it's unusual too in terms of cut. I like the amount of skin showing on leg, it feels feminine but still non gendered. It looks adaptable to how feminine/masculine could be worn.	With chunky flat sandals and big earrings. And hair tied up. Or shoe black doc Martens with socks. Or with a cardigan or jumper over.

Table 5.5.14. Online feedback. Qualitative responses from online surveys.

Online surveys: Gendered perception of the garment on and off the body.								
Garment number.	Off the body			On the body			Do you perceive the garment differently in terms of gender when it is on a body?	
	Women's	Non-gendered	Men's	Women's	Non-gendered	Men's	No	Yes
1	42%	42%	14%	14%	71%	14%	71%	28%
2	28%	57%	14%	14%	71%	14%	42%	57%
3	42%	57%	0%	28%	71%	0%	71%	28%
4	57%	28%	14%	42%	57%	0%	57%	42%
5	42%	57%	0%	71%	28%	0%	71%	28%
6	28%	57%	14%	42%	57%	0%	57%	42%
7	0%	71%	28%	0%	100%	0%	71%	28%

*Table 5.5.15. Online surveys. The gendered perception of the garments on and off the body.*

## 5.6. Conclusion.

The design process was guided by a compulsion to address the wellbeing of the group of women by providing garments that accurately represent them, which encompasses preferences for fit and aesthetics. The findings show that addressing the women's preferences in this way, has produced garments that the women like, and this is seen to be attributed to intuitive feelings about what looks better on them, rather than expressly to do with gender. The outcomes are discussed and concluded in this section in relation to the objectives listed below. Section 6 is the whole study conclusion.

- 2.To analyse how gender is assigned in clothing with reference to historical and current sources
- 4.To develop a conceptual model of women's preferences in relation to clothing, gender and body image.
- 5.To develop an experimental design approach by reviewing and reflecting on the process of constructing a series of garments that respond to women's gender related preferences.
- 6.To evaluate the experimental design approach as a model for the development of clothing for women.

Gender in clothing as perceived by these women, is the salient point of this study. It became about space and coverage, in voluminous clothing that gives the wearer room to move and offers physical and psychological comfort. Emily expressed that 'I feel more sexy or something in a trouser suit for some reason, than a dress' and 'also physically, I can dance better in a trouser suit than I can a dress!'. For Emily, freedom to move instils confidence and free, natural movement of her body. The assignment of gender in clothing can be discussed in terms of what is known about menswear and womenswear design details. Alternatively, it can be discussed with reference to the reasons why it is worn and wear characteristics, in the sense of why women choose menswear. Here discussion is centred upon the women's preferences in relation to gender in clothing and how the women engaged with the practice outcomes. When talking about menswear in section 4.4, the women focused on wear characteristics as ways to define it. These were comfort, freedom to move (not tight), and practical to wear (not



revealing). They talked about the physical detail of menswear in broad terms, and these were associated with shape, large size, monochrome, dark colours or masculine pattern, simplicity and function. It could be said that menswear satisfies combinations of these qualities in different measures for each woman. The choices made in the final feedback above, showed the mandarin worker shirt and the black boiler suit as the most liked overall. These were both spacious garments in black. Commenting on the boiler suit, one woman discussed how it felt nice to wear and was spacious. The second choice was the dress shirt. This was an unusual style made in stripe shirting with adjustment straps, and 2 women expressed that this multifunctional aspect was appealing. The third most selected was the stripe square shirt. The shape of this item was most appealing and one woman said it was flattering. It was interesting that the dress shirt and the stripe shirt were selected, as they have most characteristics pertaining to womenswear. The shape in the stripe shirt that creates the jut over the hips is not one seen in menswear. *The dress* as a clothing type is firmly linked to womenswear. The black boiler suit has a cropped leg length, which is common in womenswear; however, it is boxy and loose. Results show that the women saw the garment as non-gendered. Therefore, the boiler suit could provide balanced gender presentation, or a blank slate. Appraisal of the characteristics of the garments suggest that, colour, space, coverage, difference, adaptable are the primary choice motivations. Each of these is relatable to wellbeing, with reference to physical and psychological comfort as discussed above. A relationship between the preferences of space and coverage with comfort is salient. An inference to womenswear seemingly did not dissuade choice. The findings suggest therefore, that this group of women does not *decide* to choose menswear over womenswear, but choices are guided instead by the characteristics and aesthetics discussed in this section. This discussion compounds the findings above in table 5.5.7.

The connection between myself and the participants was deep, attributed with intimacy created through the interview and analysis, seeing photographs of them and how they present themselves and their bodily gesture. This intimacy was invaluable to the success of the practice. It drove the practice, as the responsibility to demonstrate understanding of the women's needs was intense. To present them with work suited to them meant suppressing some of my own instincts during the design process. This was the value in the experimental approach, in the sense that intuitive and responsive method of

working encouraged experimentation and mistakes. I dug deeply to forge design and making techniques which would meet the needs of the participants, whilst satisfying my creativity. In dressing, the idea of balance is discussed throughout this study as to do with offsetting characteristics, shape or masculine and feminine (section 2.3.2 and 4.4). I have tried to apply balance here to address the women's dressing needs, by contrasting fabric types, or clashing conformity in making with new ideas for haphazard in the tucking technique. It is interesting to note that the experimental techniques have produced work with a degree of sobriety and simplicity. Clothing design and making is not new, and the set process are well documented. Chance processes are documented such as the work of Subtraction cutting by Roberts (2013) and the risky design process of McQuillan (2011) and McQuillan et al. (2013). This work differs in its focus on a specific demographic, and in the interdisciplinary nature of the study, that draws on multiple research areas using primary sources. This study suggests new ways for working in the experimental and intuitive, that are generated in response to a specific research sample of women who wear men's clothing for fashion.

The conceptual model *Women's clothing preferences. Wellbeing in relation to gender and body image*, encapsulates the findings of the participant enquiry, by presenting the preferences as guidelines for the development of clothing for this specific group of women who wear men's clothing. The model is produced in response to this group, however the overarching principle of wellbeing could have wider application for the development of clothing for all people; placing wellbeing as the central focus for the development of ideas when using the model, thus encouraging clothing design that meets the physical and psychological comfort needs of the wearer. The model therefore, presents an approach to the design of clothing for women that is connected to the agency of the wearer, more so than trends or the expectation or satisfaction of the viewer. The stipulated preferences are changeable and situational, which is reflective of the openness required when designing clothing with the wellbeing of individuals in mind. The model therefore encourages the designer to respond to the ideocracies of individuals and to welcome diversity within the process of design. This overarching ethos mirrors the approach within the practice, which was intuitive, responsive and embraced the haphazard in the pursuit of newness.

The garments were liked in some way by all participants who engaged with the feedback process. The sequential development design concept had aimed to produce a series of garments, with differing design details to suit the varied preferences of the women. Wear characteristics focused entirely on wellbeing, stemmed from experiential preferences such as space and comfort; it was the exterior design that changed. The women chose different garments to suit their identity, thus the method here was successful. Some similarities are seen in the way the women suggested they may style the garments; with for example, trainers, black Doctor Marten shoes with socks, or chunky sandals. This further confirms that the process has met the women's needs, in the sense that the women identified how to use the garments within their current way of dressing. Feminine balances were employed in some cases, with hoop earrings, hair up or a silver clutch bag. The specificity of these styling elements demonstrates engagement.

This practice process of observation, experimentation, manipulation, reflection and response, aimed to create a series of experimental garments for women who wear men's clothing. It took reference from the study as a whole, drawing on theory, archival research, the photographic pilot study, and the participant enquiry in order to form a conceptual design model for womenswear. The process of collating data and applying it to the practice was complex yet rewarding. As the designer-maker, the process has placed me closer to the design work, through intricate understanding of the group of women. As a method for clothing design, it has produced meaningful results, which respond deeply and specifically to the preferences of the participant group.

## Chapter 6.

### 6.1. Opening statement.

This study has developed clothing concepts for women who wear men's clothing. The idea stemmed from my own experience of dressing, and sustained interest in why I chose to dress in a less feminine way. Within the emergent stages of this research, my placement within the subject matter was important. Knowledge of the field and my engagement within it certainly aided ideas. Without this specialist knowledge I would not have had the blue slacks, found in my favourite American vintage shop or the use of my own clothing and myself, in the comparative photographs. The research introduced new approaches into my practice, in the form of the archival study. Fieldwork in the archives of the Museum of London, the Victoria and Albert Museum and at Platt Hall was exciting, intriguing and became integral to the practice. As a creative pursuit, design is personal to me; therefore, I took an objective stance to ensure steady focus. Engaging on this level with my own practice has been challenging. I have enjoyed the rigorous process however, as I have been able to engage more deeply with my design practice. This study has fostered an informed understanding of how people, bodies, and individual needs can enrich clothing design. In fact, the parameters provoked deeper complex thinking for the development of clothing concepts in response to analysis of changing gendered social attitudes.

### 6.2. Women's clothing choices and the assignment of gender in clothing.

The findings indicated that when women make judgements about how gender is assigned by clothing, they are as influenced by the person who is wearing the clothes as they are the clothes themselves. The comparative photographic study supports this claim by significantly finding that gendered perception of clothing was judged differently when the clothes were worn on a body to when they were presented as hung garments. The Analysis of the participant enquiry theme *carrying it off* demonstrated that clothing can be seen to be 'wrong' when it communicates a mismatch between the clothing and the wearer, so the feminine wearer of masculine clothing looked 'wrong'. This finding

provides a different perspective on Negrin's (2016) discourse about embodiment and how a person's characteristics are reflected upon the garment's surface and in the bodily gestures of the wearer. When the participants appraised the comparative photographs, the comportment of the wearer looked 'wrong' if the clothing looked 'wrong'. Dressing techniques to balance an outfit were seen to be connected to embodiment, in the sense that in constructing an outfit that feels right (Woodward, 2005) a person embodies that outfit with their own sense of self. This relationship between the body and the garment, from the perspective of Barad (2007) is subject to the equal agency of both matters, body or individual and garment. An outfit that feels right (Woodward, 2005), or looks wrong, is viewed as product of the intra-action of the two matters; emphasising for the purposes of this PhD, the impact of the agential force of clothing. In this sense, when in the participant enquiry Emily wears a heavy shoe with something more feminine, the intra-action of the two with Emily's body and individuality creates a pleasing gendered balance, preventing feelings of inferiority that reside with femininity. Balance can be clear to the wearer but not the viewer (Hollander, 2016). The creation of this ideal self is related to the internal wellbeing of the wearer, and is less focused on the viewer in this sense. If bodies are how the world understands people (Negrin, 2016), then the participant's desire to cover the body with loose clothing suggests that they do not want to be understood in terms of gender. EVA W. said 'I would hate to feel stifled in the city centre because the clothing I was wearing pre-judged me.' Findings from this study strongly suggest that this phenomenological theory of embodiment may drive the selection of gendered clothing for this group of women, in the sense that body and how it is understood is central to how people are connected to the world. Thus, it is proposed that for this specific group, choice is not guided by clothing as men's or womenswear, but by characteristics and aesthetics in clothing that fulfil the women's internalised feelings about gender presentation and what feels right for them.

Historically, the pit brow women shocked middle-class onlookers with their filthy and manly workwear (section 2.3.3); yet were accepted within their own community. Gaining some insight into the experience of the pit brow women, helps to explain how the viewer's expectation of appropriate gendered dress, can influence their judgement of gendered clothing. Whilst clothing characteristics such as shirt collars and cuffs, were identified as traditional menswear characteristics by the group. They were not found to

expressly assign gender for women when choosing clothes, in the sense that a collar does not denote a man's shirt. More so, these formal details were used to create fashion aesthetics. In her interview Louisa expressed anger at being called a 'butch dyke', because she wears menswear, has short hair, and is not thin. Hollander (2016) suggests that women can be decidedly feminine or look like a woman in menswear. Clashing of genders seems to make menswear look good on women, particularly thin women. The juxtaposition of the female body against what the viewer expects to see in the clothing. This interaction between body and garment is momentary and is a sense of what feels right (Woodward, 2005). Louisa as an example, presents an unexpected version of a woman and one that is a step too far away for a heteronormative gaze. Butler's (2006) theory of performativity supports this proposal. *Clothed expectation*, defined in this study as a measure of what is expected from the clothed body, is situational, changeable and personal to the viewer. It is based on their knowledge of what people wear or what is familiar to them. Throughout this study, what is and is not expected as a measure of acceptance seems to be key. Butler's (2006) gender theory, is based upon historically and continued repeating of gender cues. Historical writing from Veblen (1899) and Matthews (2010) describes how the roles of women and men were acted out in the dress of the Victorian era. This is supported by studies about the pit brow women, where 'trousers were seen as a blatant manifestation of defeminising' (John, 1980: 180). In the participant enquiry Ella noted that crop tops and skirts were feminine because they showed the skin. This sexual display (Steele, 1989), was supported by Eicher (2001) in identifying how womenswear is cut out and parts removed, which accords with Young's (2005) 'slit aesthetic' (2005: 67). Menswear is viewed more positively such as Hollander's (2016) description of the suit as 'sober beauty' (2016: 82). Clothed expectation responds to Butler's (2006) gender theory, by acknowledging the repetition of gendered acts as a whole, then seeking to isolate clothed expectation as branch of this.

### 6.3. Women's clothing preferences: Well-being in relation to clothing, gender and body image.

It was evident from the way the women spoke across multiple themes, about wearing clothes that their choice of clothing could impact their sense of well-being (chapter 4

discussion, p109-113). The participants talked about how tight clothing made them feel fat, but larger clothing made them feel small which was positive 'I don't feel big in men's clothes' (Jessica). Functional and practical clothing such as trousers, made it easier to go about daily tasks, but skirts were '...a bit difficult to navigate' (Noelle). The clothing preferences focused around these feelings of physical or psychological comfort and were identified as shape, space, coverage, comfort, practicality, function, difference, and colour and became central to the design thinking. These are represented in the conceptual model in section 5.5.3.5. Shape and space featured prominently in the women's descriptions of how they preferred clothing to fit on their body. Large sizes were found to evoke positive body image and feelings of comfort and freedom, and it was these 'wear' characteristics that were focused upon for the practice. This was translated subtly, with consideration for how clothing may move with the living body when made in different types of fabric. Function and practicality and ideas for reinforcement were linked to preferences for coverage. The train of thought connected coverage with reassurance, as some women had spoken about feeling sexualised. Reinforcement through layering and gussets, along with space and shape in the Victorian square cut shirts drew them into the centre of the design thinking. This was how the preferences were viewed by the designer maker. This was a filtering of sorts. The issue of gender was, and is, widely illustrated in fashion collections and discussed in the wider media. It was important to understand why the women chose to wear men's clothing, in order to design clothing that was different to the current offer for these women. Moreover, real life reflections on women's attitudes to gendered clothing was key for designing clothing to meet their specific needs. Rather than making assumptions based on trend reports, or existing clothing on the market.

#### 6.4. Experimental design approaches: responsive making.

The mind-set for the experimental design approach was to test ideas, with a focus on well-being. The idea of changing the priorities of fashion clothing development, to place the wellbeing of the wearer to the forefront, was key. The experimental process of Responsive Making had an overarching ethos of openness, taking risks and allowing mistakes to happen is one which has proved successful. The method was generated

during the square cut shirt proportional exploration. Archival fieldwork was a key component in the practice, and the zero-waste square cut shirt cutting and construction process were foundational to the methods. A programme of *planned changes and rules* was generated by the researcher to explore the proportional cutting method of the square cut shirt. The method set the parameters for proportionally calculated changes, therefore how cutting would be altered was pre-defined; see section 5.3.1. The method was a success as a means of generating new ideas. It was rigorous and mathematical, yet exciting and surprisingly creative as a design approach, embracing change and mistakes. The designer-maker had to be intuitive and responsive when constructing a shirt from the altered sizes and shapes of the garment pieces; 'responsive making' was defined. The success of this method can be partially attributed to the conscious decision to work in half scale, thus half the fabric use, which ethically allowed me the indulgence of these explorative garments. Additionally, constructing in half scale is swift, therefore ideas were not laboured, but immediate and responsive. The ugly and weird were accepted and the method produced techniques of over-sewing and haphazard tucks, processes that disregarded rules of neatness and uniformity, yet were intricate and subtle.

The method grew into a collaborative process between maker and fabric, where the dimensions, properties and natural movement of the fabric had to be accommodated. A veritable relinquishment of control of the will of the designer in this relationship without agential hierarchy, generated a unique and exciting method for the creation of garment design ideas. This method and crucially a theoretical grounding in the post-human theory of new materialism, is open to development and further research. A method of sequential development aimed to create a varied range of garments to meet the different needs of the participants. Garments were developed often in the final fabric from the start, and design details and features such as box pleats, haphazard tucks and over-sewing, were kept or changed as one garment was completed and the next begun. A value in the process was the detail, responsive making became a strategy for working more intricately. Intuitive decisions were made in response to the fabric, regarding the application of techniques, features, shape and space. In this way outcomes would be varied, and combine the preferences in different measures for the varied dressing needs of the women. With reference to well-being, fabrics were chosen with consideration to how they would react with the body, such as the old bed sheet, that



was softened to the body without clinging (section 5.4.3.1). Cutting in different cloths similarly varied the outcomes visually such as how they held shape, and sat or stood off the body thus impacting the provision of space. The preference for space was found in the large scale of the square cut shirt (section 4.2), a shape engrained in this practice and seen on the boxy and spacious garments that offered freedom to move. The notion of the space between the body and the garment as a consideration in design was crucial to the aspect of wellbeing. As discussed in section 000, this space was the provider of comfort, both psychological and physical, and was variable and changeable. Construction details seen in the square cut shirt such as gussets and binders were integral to the practice as reinforcement techniques. These details physically reinforced, and additionally infused an aesthetic of functionality, through the angular shapes sewn into the shirts.

Success of the approach could be measured by if the women liked the clothing, see section 5.5.2. The feedback confirmed the women liked the outcomes, and the process produced wearable and considered design work. This practice and the methods and techniques herein, extend thinking in explorative design practices, such as Roberts' (2013) subtraction cutting and McQuillan (2011) risky design practice. Waste minimisation was an overarching principle for the practice. Zero waste cutting was established within the square cut process, therefore much of the practice worked to this principle. The work adds to zero waste design practices such as McQuillan (2011) by readdressing old methods.

## 6.5. Contribution.

The participant enquiry produced clear but unanticipated results about how the women selected clothing. With reference to the phenomenological theory of embodiment, this research study found that the women did not want to have their body define them. In the sense that they did not want to be defined by gender, but by who they were personally. This is a sense of non-gendered. To address this in design, the preferences connected to well-being were combined with historical research to direct clothing development towards shapes and details that would accurately represent the women by not predefining their bodies. The thesis and supporting work document and explore new ideas for experimental design concepts. This work is original in its focus on women

who wear men's clothing. The conceptual model, *Women's clothing preferences. Wellbeing in relation to gender and body image*, records the final preferences which were confirmed through layers of questioning and feedback methods. The model is placed within this thesis for the reader to use and develop and is applicable to the design of wellbeing centred clothing for all people. For the designer, wellbeing can be found a sensitive process, that connects them deeply to the wearer and has the potential to generate meaningful clothing, coupled with a sense of extending or developing their practice. The model is bound to the practice method through wellbeing, in the sense that responsive making is grounded in a maker-fabric intra-action, thus a sensitivity to the will of the fabric and for the process.

The design concepts implemented within the practice centred around the overarching method of responsive making, and this approach produced new ways of working, new methods and techniques. The method of responsive making made intrinsic connections to the historical research in the clothing of the pit brow women. In section 4.2.5 I extrapolated on the natural will of the fabric as it 'crumpled and moulded to the body' (Jackson, 2019:80), and referenced Miller and Woodward (2012) when noting the softening of clothing when it wears and relaxes; in intra-action with the body. It is clear that this historical research generated strands of thinking related to recognising the agential force of the fabric or garment, which when folded into the experimental design processes, became the root of the responsive making. The design approach formulated for the half scale shirts proportional exploration is a repeatable and expandable concept. This method of planned changes and rules was a successful means of developing initial ideas, and could be reused, or changes made to adjust the parameters. The methods worked because in the sense of relinquishment of control, the designer's decision making and sense of *what clothing is*, was somewhat removed and this attributed to the maker-fabric collaboration. This forged expressive and sometimes unwearable ideas that were found to be exciting starting points for design development. During the construction process, a technique was generated defined as *haphazard tucks*. This is a new development, generated through a deep involvement with the agency or will of the fabric, and there is wide scope for further work and theoretical research in this area. Space between the garment and body, as consideration in garment development was critical to the success of the practice. This strand of thinking was generated in response

to the research findings from the participant enquiry in section 4.4.5, and from the literature review in section 2.6 which overwhelmingly place space in a place of importance for wellbeing. As discussed throughout this thesis, space could evoke feelings of for example, freedom, feeling smaller, not looked at or not restricted. The archival research in the square cut shirt and the pit brow women, recorded the observation of space within historical clothing, providing design direction and theoretical underpinning. Space, makes connections to the aforementioned removal of designer centred control, where the space as a habitual by-product of design, becomes primary.

A record of the clothing archives field work has produced a valuable tabulated archival resource of the menswear items observed at The Museum of London, The Victoria and Albert Museum and Platt Hall Manchester.

Surveys asking about gender perception of clothing on and off found significantly that clothing is perceived differently when not on a body. As noted below, this survey and versions of it have potential to be extended.

## 6.6. Evaluation of methods used.

### 6.6.1. Strengths.

The combination of practice with theory and crucially a historical research, deepened the researcher's connection to the design work. The outcomes were successful insofar as the participants liked the garments that had been made. Asking the participants to assess the design outcomes in this way contributed to the validation of the conceptual model created as a guide for the development of clothing for this specific group of women and wider as a reference for the development of clothing with wellbeing in mind.

The organisation of the participant interview schedule worked well. The women were at ease with the researcher, and a rapport was established easily so the participants seemed able to speak freely and in depth about the topics. The closed Facebook group was a successful method of collating the clothing diary information, and allowed some interaction between the participants involved. The participants engaged well with the

study, they were interested in the outcomes and many took part in all stages, which was a considerable time commitment.

The pilot study was successful in producing significant findings and has the potential for future development. This would seek to compound the findings by engaging with a wider field and an increased number of respondents, as although the findings were mathematically significant in the pilot study, the number of respondents was low.

The inclusion of archival study within the PhD became pivotal to the direction of the design work. This focused engagement with the artefacts generated a deep connection to the design work and made crucial links to theory, fusing the components of this PhD study. A tabulated archival resource was produced from the clothing archives fieldwork. It collated the accession numbers of each artefact viewed and detailed the observations made.

#### 6.6.2. Limitations.

The participant enquiry was conducted with a convenience sample of women studying and working at Manchester Metropolitan University; therefore, the distribution is narrow.

To improve the review of the practice outcomes, interesting results may have been gathered by sending out additional surveys to a wider group. An objective view of the garments from respondents who are not invested with the process could have been obtained.

The pilot study was conducted on a small sample. The findings of the study were significant and the study could be extended to gain a wider view the gendered perception of clothing on and off the body.

#### 6.7. Directions for future work.

The pilot study has possibilities for further work. It addresses the idea of initial judgement or appraisal of someone, based on the idea of clothed expectation. It presents a method of tracking changes in gendered social attitudes.

The research has defined a market in women who wear men's clothing for fashion. Future work could include defining further specific groups, or even narrowing the current group demographic. The thesis and model could be used for garment design in connection with wellbeing within the clothing industry.

The interview data was rich with broad ranging topics, and enabled the researcher to gain a deep understanding of each participant. The breadth of the data will enable the researcher to write further papers, thus the contribution to knowledge from this research will continue. It offers opportunity for expansion of the research into a full theory-based PhD on the topic of clothing selection motivations. The data gathered from each participant was personal and promoted possibilities for reading into categories beyond this PhD, this suggests that case studies, for this type of research would be beneficial for future studies, thus enabling the wider reading.

Responsive making is a new and expandable practice method; an intrinsic connection with post-human theory perfectly places the method for further theoretical research and the development of clothing that extends beyond trends and clothed expectation.

#### 6.8. Closing statement.

The participant enquiry was essential to this PhD study. It was important to have these first-hand accounts of women's experience with clothing in order to produce meaningful and suitable garment designs. The interviews produced rich data and unexpected results, which would not have been available to me had I not included real life women within the research study. Manual analysis of the interviews formed a deep connection between the researcher and the participants and this was key to the understanding their clothing preferences. I believe that the depth of understanding would have been reduced had I not carried out this rigorous work myself. A connection with the women placed pressure on me to produce design work suited to their needs, knowing what I did about how their lives were impacted by clothing. Placing the participants at the centre of the design work had the effect of quashing any status motivation of the designer, as the design was so intertwined with their accounts of dressing.

Conducting garment design practice within an academic framework, can begin to spread understanding about the complexity of the practice. This PhD study has demonstrated

that garment development can be sensitive and deep thinking, and it paves the way for people-centred design that is conceptual rather than trend led. As a strand of thinking, it is hoped that garments designed in this way can have longevity, in a time of overproduction in fashion.

The literature review showed that binaries of gender are discussed widely in terms of clothing, dress or fashion. Little has been written specifically about non-gendered clothing. This academic record of the development of garments for women who wear men's clothing, aims to establish non-gendered clothing within academia. It is hoped that theories about non-gendered will become more widespread.

In my experience of working in fashion design in further education, is that it is often maligned, perceived as frivolous, mostly by parents. However, this is not the case for similar disciplines such as graphic design, photography or fine art, which are more densely populated with male students and are masculine in their origins, as technical or deep thinking. In fact, good garment design is technical and complex. The drafting of patterns requires skill, and is a valued trade. The fashion industry provides a wealth of jobs. Ways of dressing are integral to the way lives are lead. People need clothes for a wide range of reasons from basic coverage, to fashion, to workwear, and more. Garment design deserves to be taken seriously within academia.

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## Archives

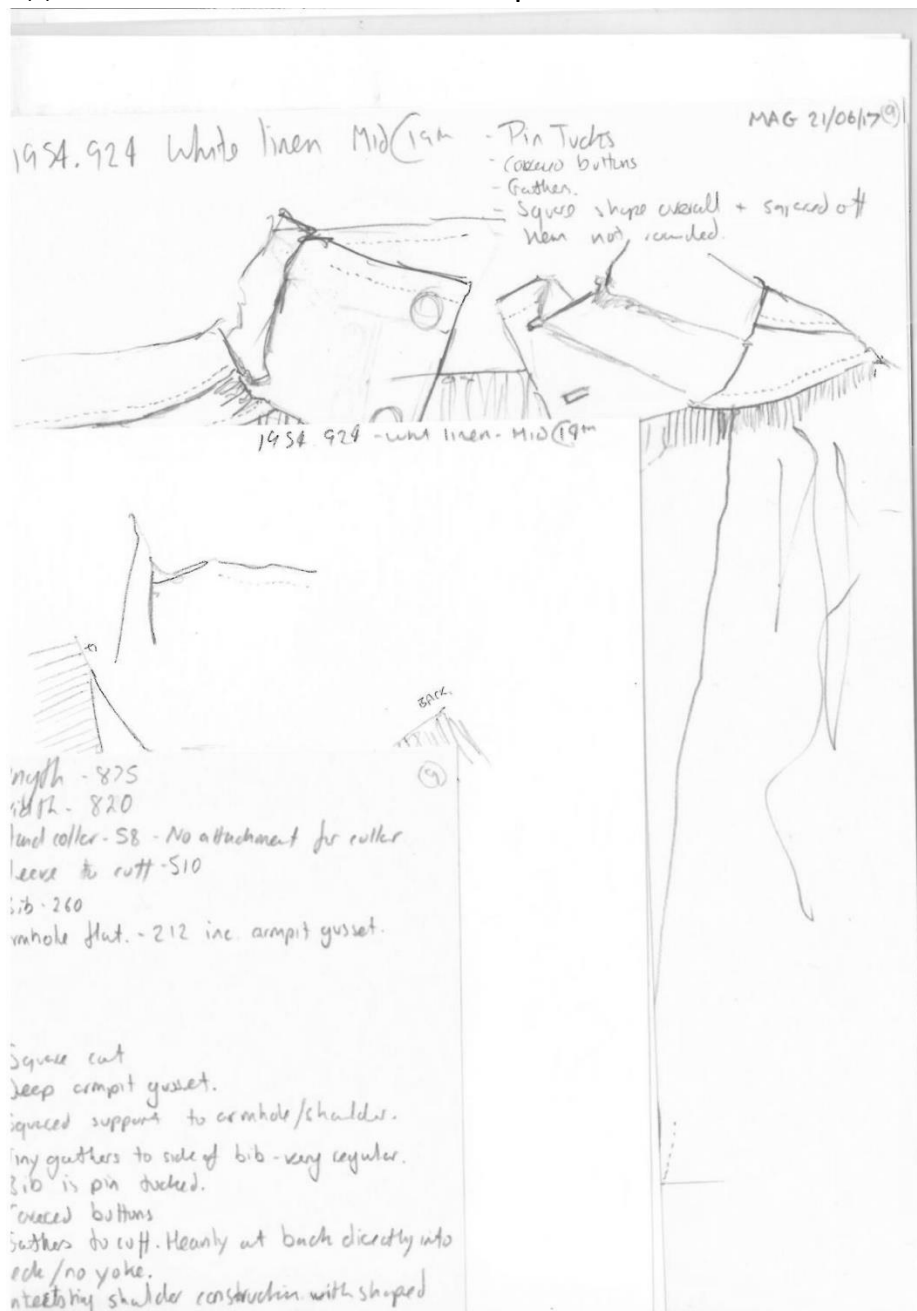
The Museum of London, 150 London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN

The Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion,  
Blythe House Archive, 23 Blythe Rd, London W14 0QX

Manchester Art Gallery, the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Rusholme, Manchester M14

Appendices.

## Appendix A. Archival record example

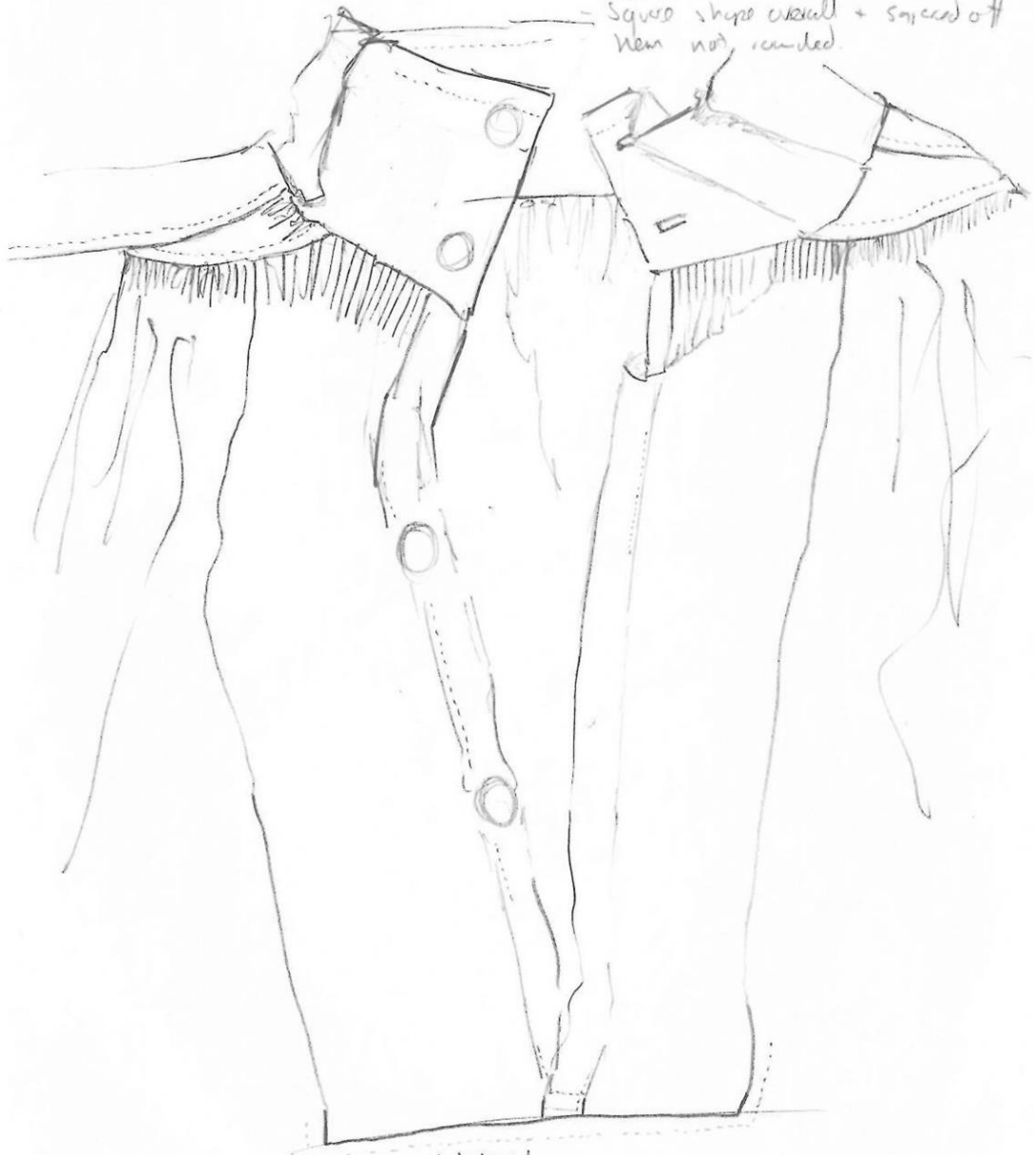




1954.924 White linen Mid 1940s

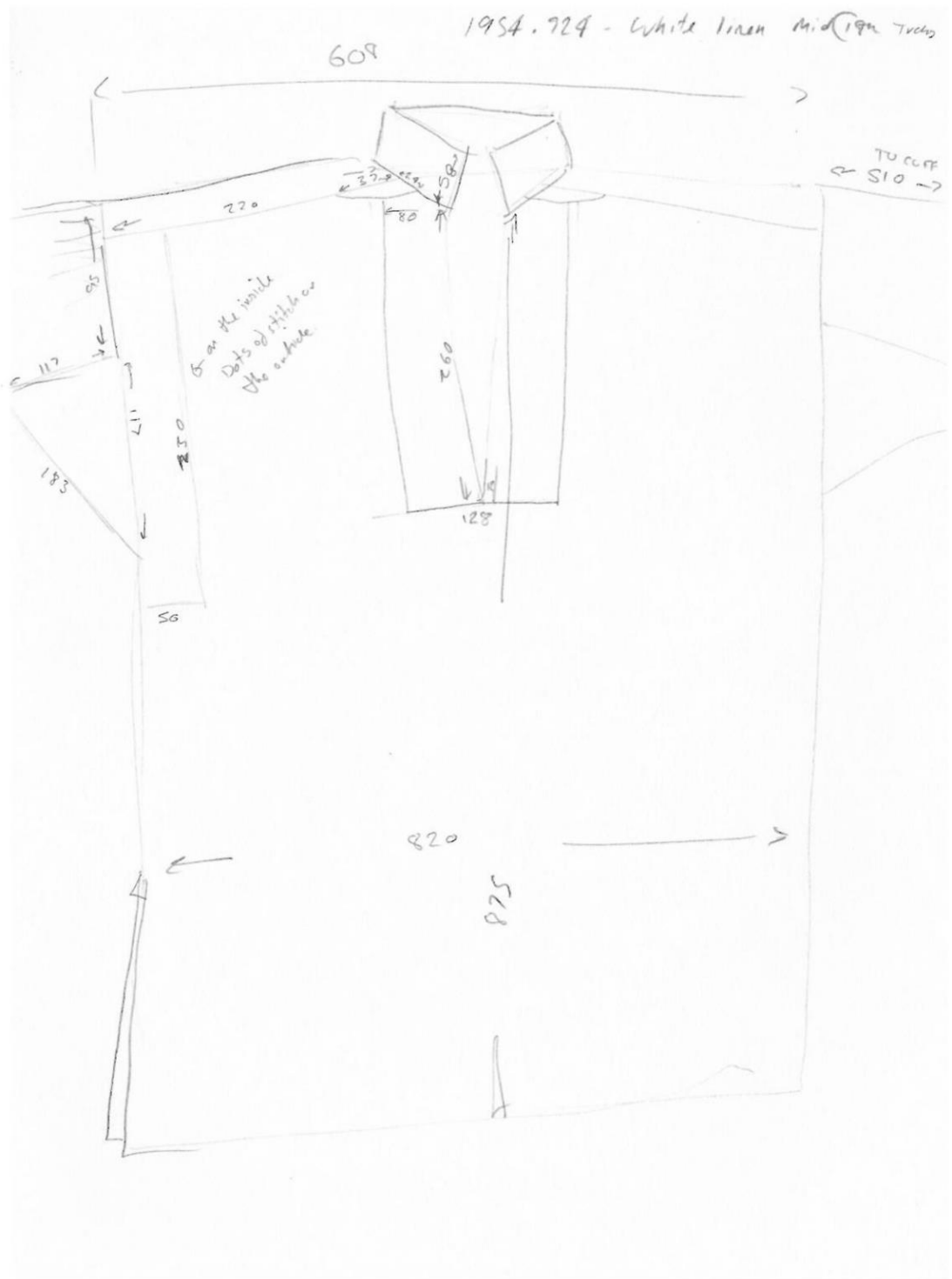
MAG 21/06/17

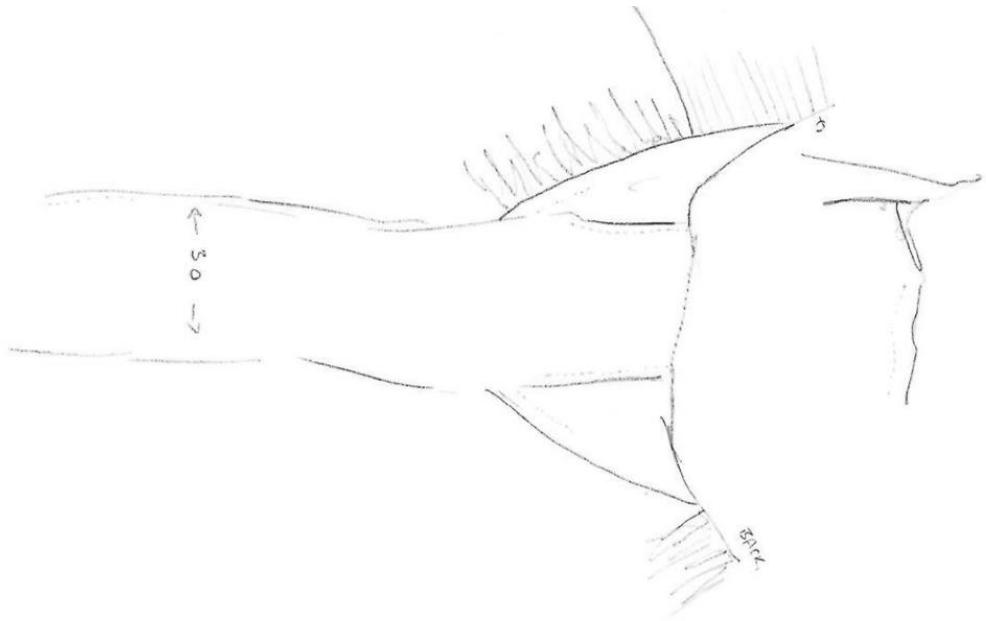
- Pin Tucks
- Covered buttons
- Gather.
- Square shape overall + spread off hem not rounded.



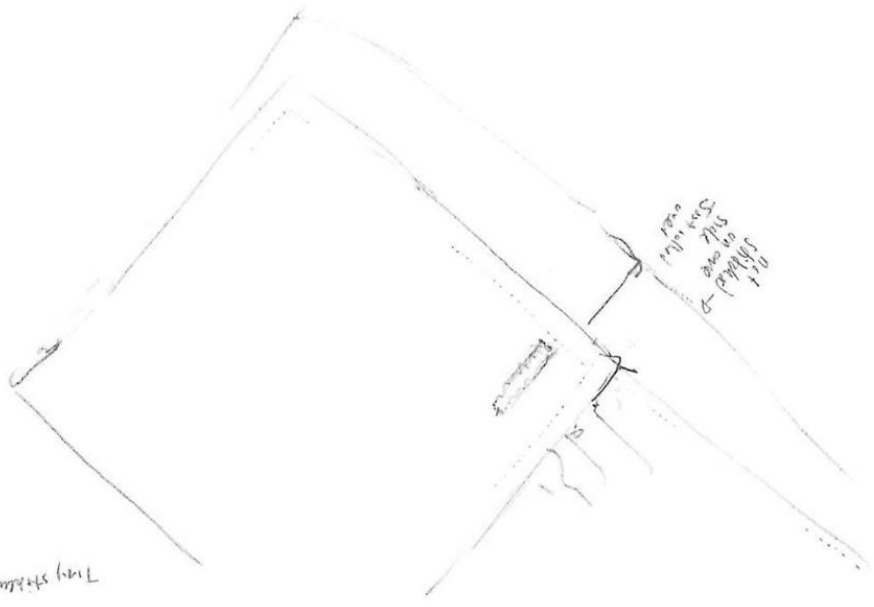
23 pin tucks on  
each side  
→

←





1934. 7.12 - same as 1934. 7.12



1934. 7.12 - same as 1934. 7.12

Length - 825

Width - 820

Stand collar - S8 - No attachment for collar

Sleeve to cuff - S10

Bib - 260

Armhole flat. - 212 inc. armpit gusset.

Square cut

Deep armpit gusset.

Squared support to armhole/shoulder.

Tiny guthers to side of bib - very regular.

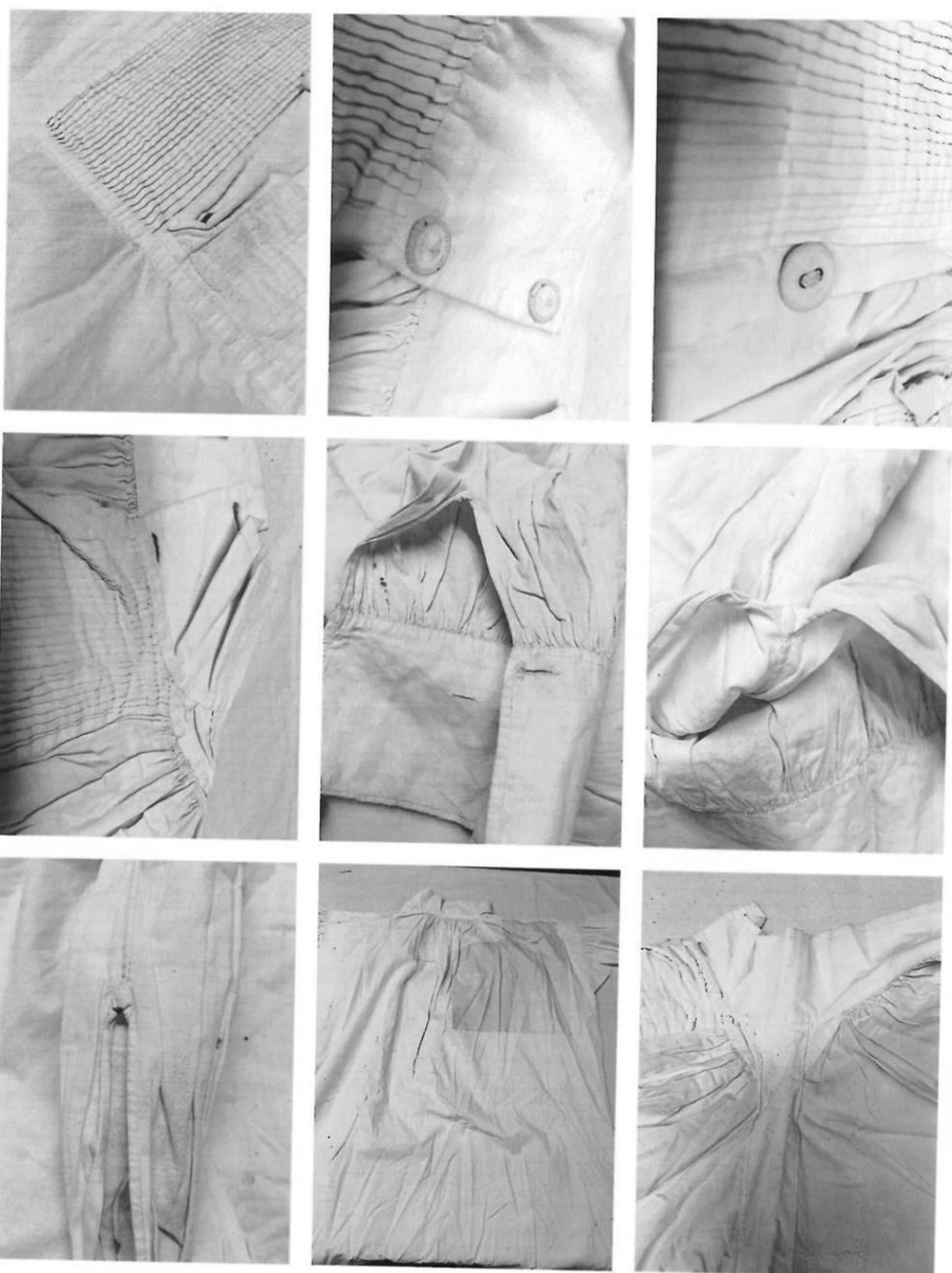
Bib is pin tucked.

Covered buttons

Guthers to cuff. Nearly at back directly into neck/no yoke.

Interesting shoulder construction with shaped inserts.

Cuff and side vent gussets.







## Image set 1

A – Short brown hair



B – Long blonde hair



## Image set 1

C – Pink car vest

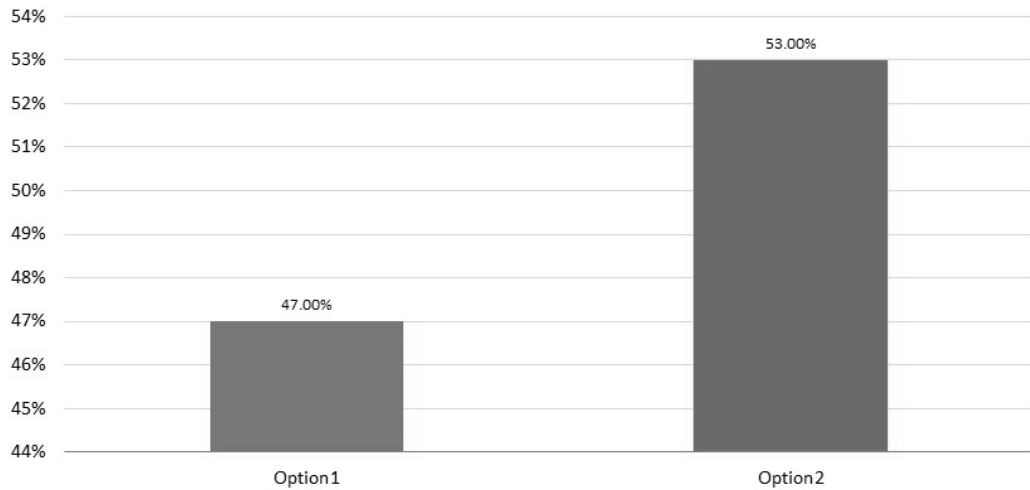


D – Baby blue slacks



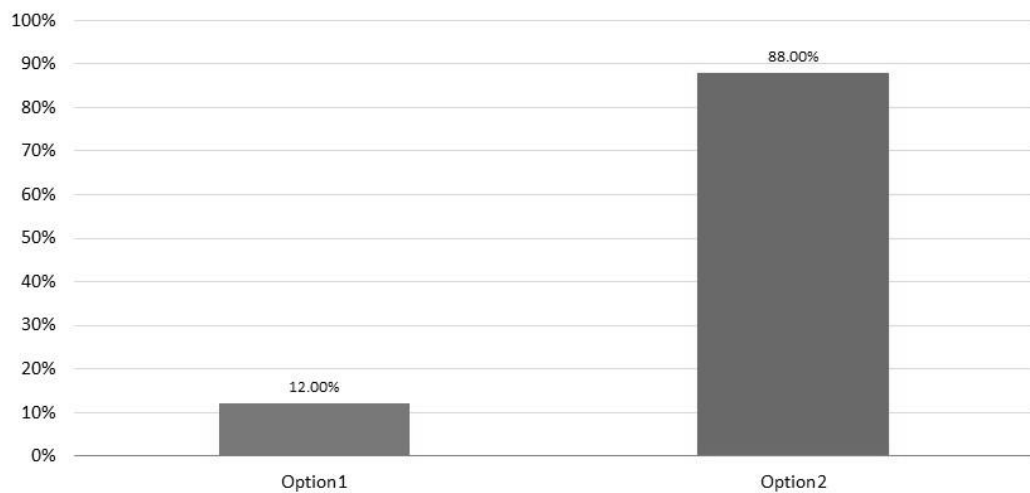


1 - Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

2 - Please select all of the garments which you perceive to be designed for a male body.



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

## Image set 2

A – Short brown hair

B – Long blonde hair

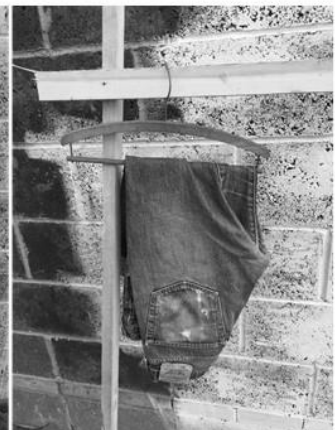


## Image set 2

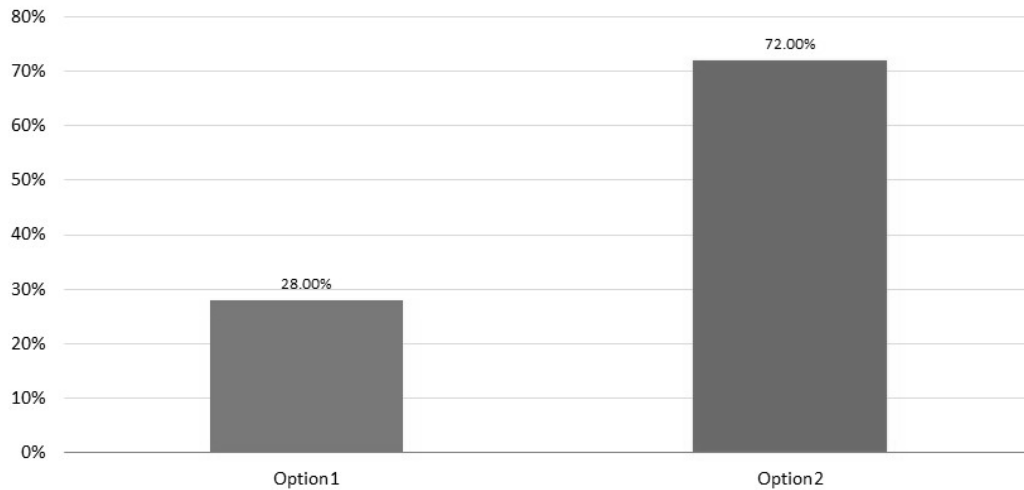
C – Brown cardigan

D – White shirt

E – Blue Levis jeans

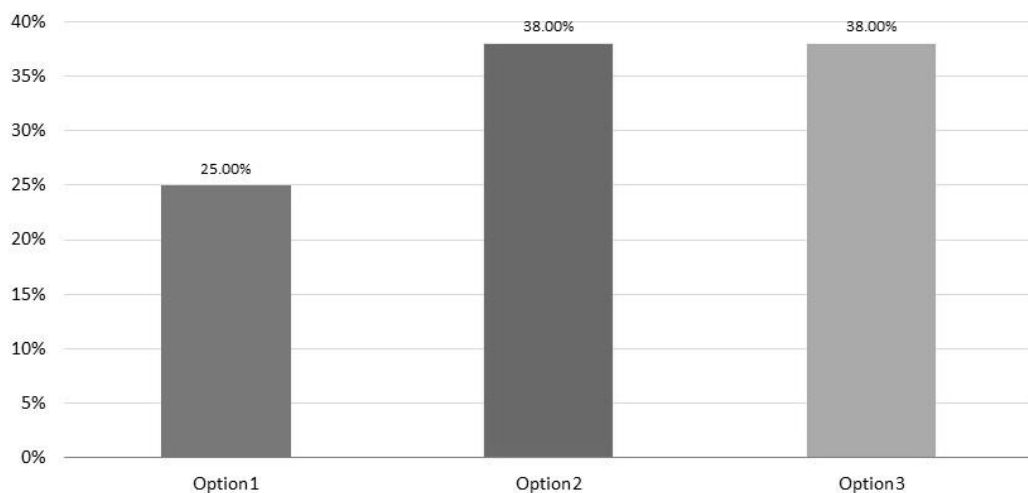


### 3 - Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

### 4 - Please select all of the garments which you perceive to be designed for a male body.



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

## Image set 3

A – Short brown hair



B – Long blonde hair



## Image set 3

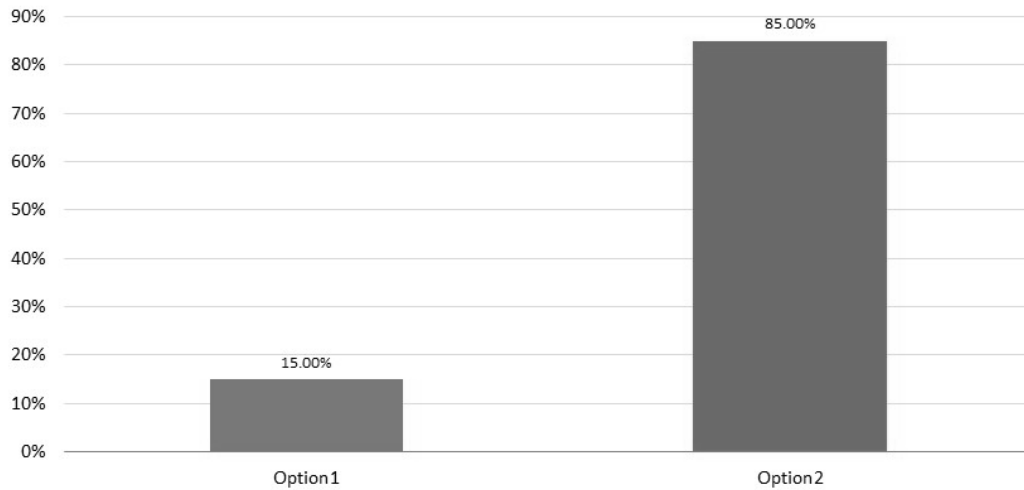
C – Pastel stripe shirt and blue tie



D – Blue jeans

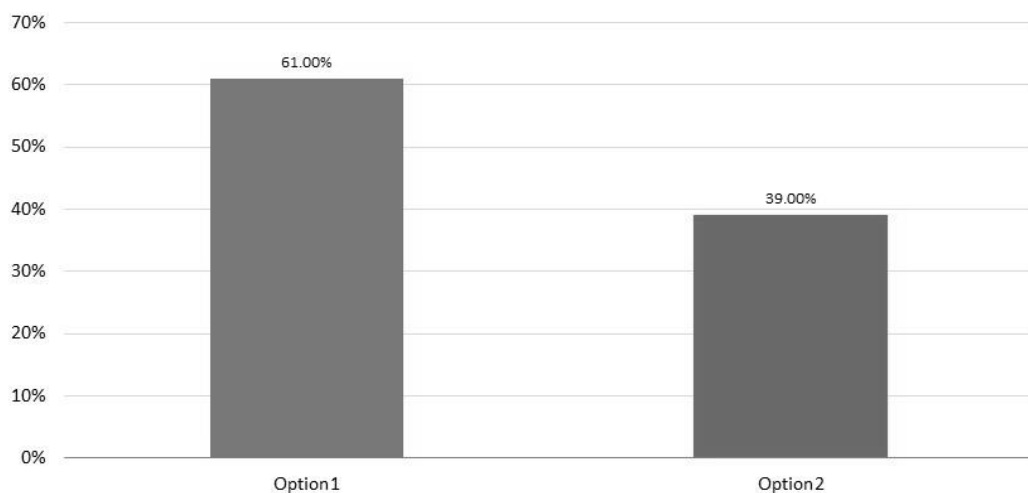


## 5 - Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

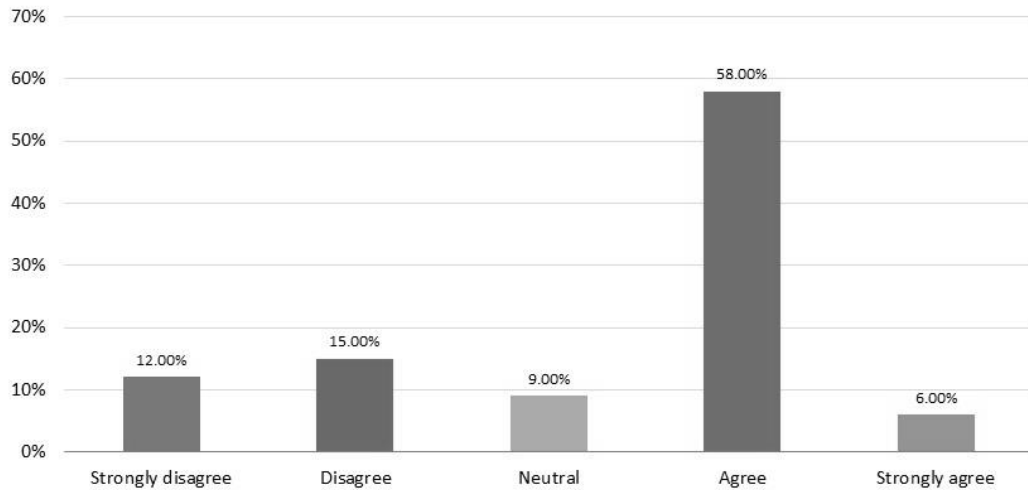
## 6 - Please select all of the garments which you perceive to be designed for a male body.



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

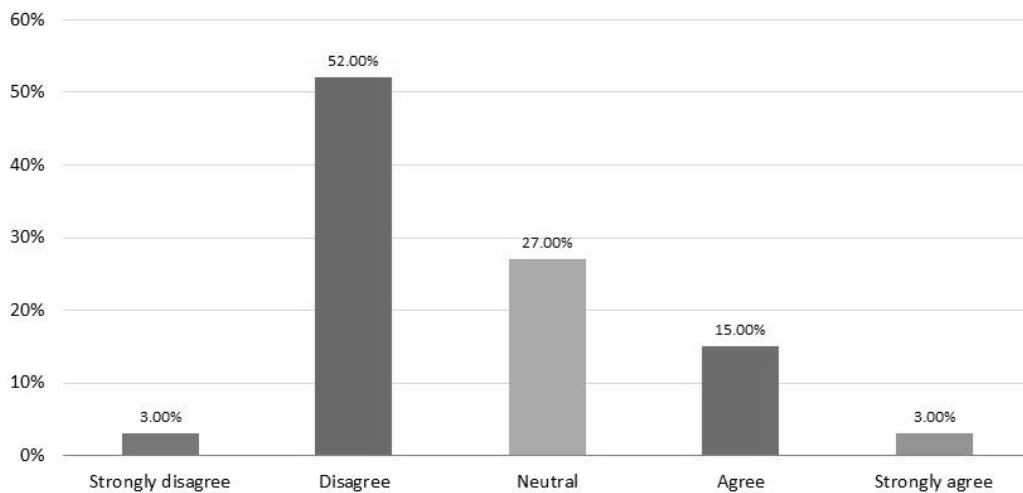
Looking back at the images of the models in the clothing.

### 7 - The clothing looks different on each model.



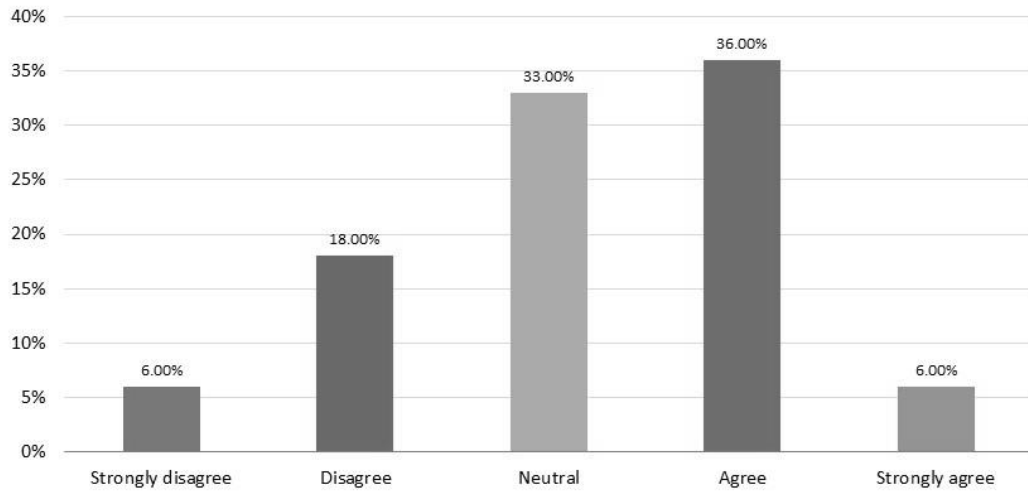
**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

### 8 - It is easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for.



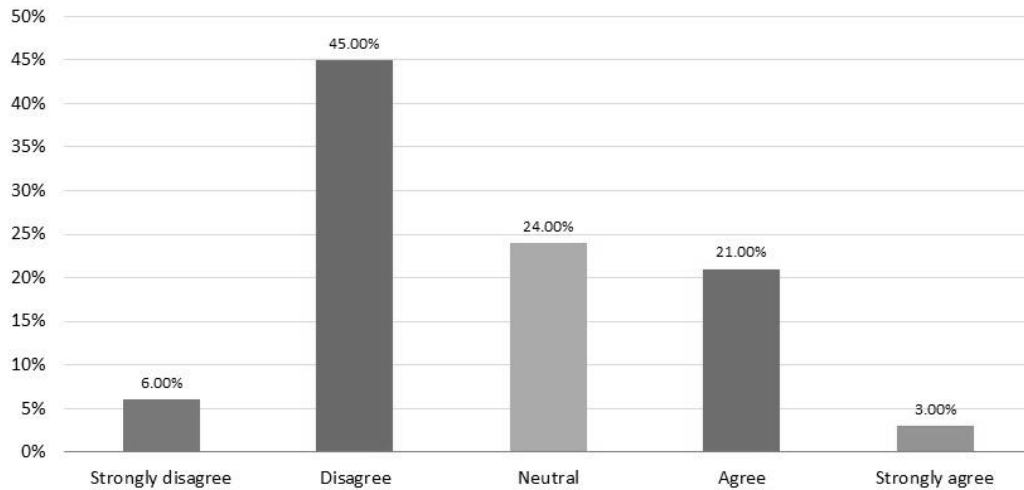
**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

9 - The models look better in clothing which I think is designed for their body shape.



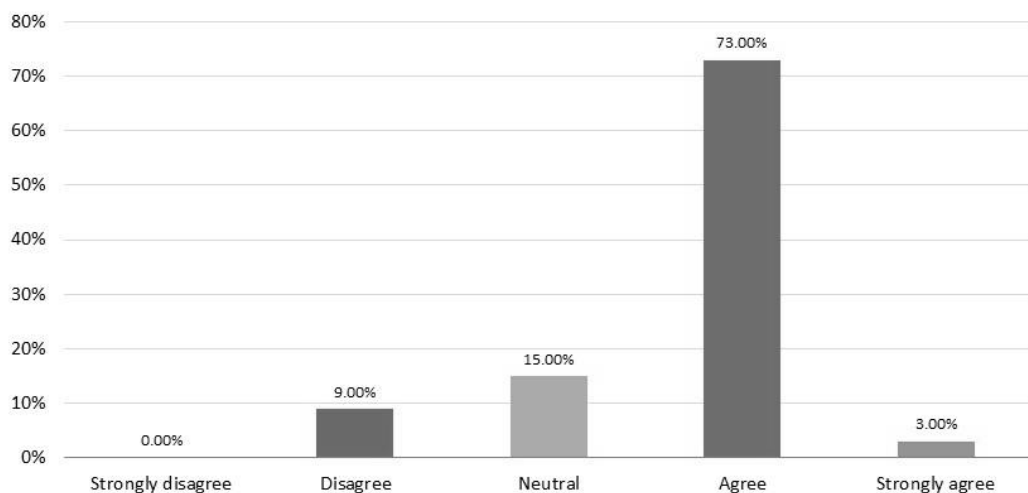
Looking back at the images of hanging clothing

10 - It is easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for when it is not on a body.



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro

11 - I perceive the clothing differently when it is not on a body.



**SURVEYANALYTICS**  
by  QuestionPro



## Chi-square data with highlighted significant results

Question 1 – Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?					
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		P value
1-brunette	14	46.67%	15	50%	0.04
2 - blonde	16	53.33%	15	50%	

Question 2 – Please select all of the garments which you perceive to be designed for a male body.					
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		P value
1 – pink vest	4	11.76%	17	50%	18.38
2 – blue slacks	30	88.24%	17	50%	

Question 3 – Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?					
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		P value
1 - brunette	8	27.59%	14.5	50%	4.96
2 - blonde	12	72.41%	14.5	50%	

Question 4 – Please select all of the garments which you perceive to be designed for a male body.					
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		P value
1 - cardigan	12	25%	16	33.33%	1.5
2 –wht shirt	18	37.5%	16	33.33%	
3 - jeans	18	37.5%	16	33.33%	

Question 5 – Which image appears to be the most feminine to you?					
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		P value
1 - brunette	4	14.81%	13.5	50%	12
2 - blonde	23	85.19%	13.5	50%	

Question 6 – Please select all of the garments which you perceive to be designed for a male body.					
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		P value
1 – shirt/tie	20	60.61%	16.5	50%	1.1
2 - jeans	13	39.39%	16.5	50%	

1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Question 7 – The clothing looks different on each model.						
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	4	12.12%	6.6	20%	29.886.6	0.001
2	5	15.15%	6.6	20%		
3	3	9.09%	6.6	20%		
4	19	57.58%	6.6	20%		
5	2	6.06%	6.6	20%		

Question 8 – It is easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for.						
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	1	3.03%	6.6	20%	27.15	0.001
2	17	51.52%	6.6	20%		
3	9	27.27%	6.6	20%		
4	5	15.15%	6.6	20%		
5	1	3.03%	6.6	20%		

Question 9 – The models look better in clothing which I think is designed for their body shape.						
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	2	6.06%	6.6	20%	13.82	0.0079
2	6	18.18%	6.6	20%		
3	11	33.33%	6.6	20%		
4	12	36.36%	6.6	20%		
5	2	6.06%	6.6	20%		

Question 10 – It is easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for when it is not on a body.						
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	2	6.06%	6.6	20%	18.97	0.0008
2	15	45.45%	6.6	20%		
3	8	24.24%	6.6	20%		
4	7	21.21%	6.6	20%		
5	1	3.03%	6.6	20%		

Question 11 – I perceive the clothing differently when it is not on a body.						
Category	Observed Frequency		Expected Frequency		Chi – square	P value
1	0	0%	6.6	20%	59.58	0.0001
2	3	9.09%	6.6	20%		
3	5	15.15%	6.6	20%		
4	24	72.73%	6.6	20%		
5	1	3.03%	6.6	20%		

## Appendix A. Pilot interview transcribe (Eva S)

P - So I'm going to ask you about questions to do with your clothing but also questions to do with your opinions about masculinity and femininity.

P - How would you describe masculinity?

E - Oh, well that's a really hard question. Mmmmm.... I suppose... that's a really hard thing to describe. What makes someone masculine. I mean traditionally, I suppose traditionally you'd think of like a man in a suit or in some kind of lumberjack shirt. I guess you think of strength, aggression, erm dominance. But that's not, that's not how, I'd describe masculinity, but it's the cultural conception of masculinity. But then it's, it's kind of hard to label what is masculine and feminine I guess. You think of men's body shapes that are straight up and down.

P - Do you think it needs context?

E - What the question?

P - Well, the things that you're talking about are to do with masculinity, and traditional ideas of masculinity. But are those the things that immediately come to mind?

E - Yeah, they're the only things I could think of to describe masculinity, because otherwise you wouldn't. It's a really hard thing to describe.

P - So the ideas that you have of masculinity are more traditional stereotypes of masculinity

E - I think when you're asked that question, the only thing you *can* default to is stereotypes, because otherwise you have to define it yourself and the idea of m and f are so culturally engrained, that to say, I don't know something to say something counter intuitive like, I don't know, a shaved head is very feminism very feminist...ha, good Freudian slip!... a shaved head is very feminine or short hair is feminine. I mean it's, it's not seen as feminine. Or to say, I don't know, yeah a big suit is feminine, it's, it's not, it's roundly conceived of as masculine so I don't think you can separate you own personal ideas about what is masculine and what is feminine from the cultural ideal of what those things are, because that where gender gets messy and that's where gender theory gets messy. That if you're trans, you're trying to pass as the opposite gender, and so you'll wear extremely masculine in inverted commas, or extremely feminine, *in inverted commas*, clothes.

P - So traditionally...

E - Yeah even if you don't have traditional ideas of gender.

P - Do you think that you're masculine at all?

E - I, I don't think I'm masculine, but then I'm also aware that I do a lot and have done a lot of things that could be viewed as masculine. I like I grew up wearing playing football for example and wearing loads of sportswear and t-shirts and baggy things, and err I have short hair, em I've had very short hair. Em, I lift weights, I play a lot of like sport, so I feel like I do, I do a lot of things that you might think oh! That's really masculine! I don't think of myself as masculine. I think I'm quite feminine, but then I looked in the mirror and I was like oh...it's hard to see yourself with outside yes I guess. Especially when my hair's up because like half of it is shaved. I only noticed that other day I was like oh I do look a bit scary when I'm in my gym kit and I've got my hair tied up. I don't really think of myself as scary! Maybe I'm not. So no I don't think of myself as particularly masculine no.

P - What do you think makes an item of clothing masculine?

E - Well...these are hard questions! Erm... I'd still go back to traditional ideas around masculine and feminine clothes so I'd say shirts, suits, trousers, brogues, like that traditional, traditional menswear.

P – Do you think that fabric contributes to the masculinity?

E – Fabric. I think, not to the masculinity...I think men's clothes are heavier and thicker as a rule, like they keep you warmer so I think they're heavier and thicker, but I wouldn't necessarily associate that with masculinity I associate that with men's clothing in particular that it's heavier. I wouldn't say that's a necessarily masculine trait, maybe it is.

P – What about the practicality of the clothing?

E – I was thinking that the other day, um that men's clothing is definitely more useful. Like I said it's warmer, it's thicker, it's comfier. It's useful for what it says it's useful for so if it's like sports clothes, it's made to do sport rather than wander around shops in as some women's sports wear is. So yeah, I feel like it's made more for function, and rather than just to look nice because I find a lot of women's clothes look nice but don't keep you warm.

P – Does shape make clothing masculine?

E – Yeah, yeah because men's clothes are, because they're cut for male or female bodies. So male clothes are for someone who is straight up and down. Women's clothes usually go in at the waist out at the hips, out at bust and women's clothes are always cut closer to the body as well and men's clothes are bigger.

P – What would you consider to be the significant sartorial characteristics of men's clothes? So when you see men's clothing what would be the thing that would let you know that it was a man's item?

E – Err, the side that the buttons are on. I actually had to check the sides of the buttons of so many of my clothes because I didn't know if they were men's or women's I was 'I don't know!', when I was doing the pictures for you. Because I've had them so long like I literally didn't know which was which and some of them I was like 'oh that is women's, it doesn't look like it I didn't think it was! Em, but otherwise, yeah the width of the waist, whether it's like a shirt, whether it's pulled in at the waist. I think just by looking at an item of clothing it would be really difficult to tell, especially now it would be really difficult to tell if it was for a man or a women, just by looking at it. I mean the size obviously, I mean it might be bigger but who knows!

P – What is the most masculine garment you can think of?

E – Erm, a suit.

P – Does the masculinity of a garment make you want to wear it?

E – Oh, I don't know.

P – Is it more to do with just the general look of the garment?

E – Oh I never thought about that. My coat! I've got a coat that is grey and it's wool and it's got a fake sheepskin...No! Maybe a real sheepskin collar. And I liked that because it did look really masculine, like it's got big shoulder pads, it's completely straight, it's too big for me, as all my menswear is too big for me. Um, and I thought that that looked really cool just because it had really sharp clean lines, but I think that was more because it had sharp clean lines less because I was like oh that looks quite manly. Erm, the shirt I've got with the like applique undone bow-tie. I suppose I thought that was a nice, it's a traditional men's item, and that's what attracted me to it, but I think it was more the desire to wear like quite simple things. So like white shirt, denim shirt, checked shirts, jumpers. They're all quite, yeah they're all quite simple. I mean not plain, some of them have patterns, but they're not very fussy. So I think that's what attracts me to menswear more than anything, and also 'cos it's baggy and it's warm and it's comfortable. None of which, none of my girls clothes are any of those things.

P – So my next question was how do you think that the way you feel in the clothing, feel *in* clothing, is impacted when you wear male gendered clothing? So how do you feel when you wear it?

E – Just more comfortable. Just like more...less restricted! It's if you...because all my stuff is a least two sizes too big! Except the jumper I'm wearing which shrinks every time I wash it! This used to be a baggy jumper and now it's like really fitted! Ha! I think it's only got two or three more washes left until I can't wear it anymore! Um, yeah just to feel comfortable and unrestricted is my main reason, and then if you want to put a belt on it to look a bit nicer. Which with loads of the shirts I do, you can and then you can loosen the belt, so you're more in control and you never feel like you're imprisoned by really tight clothes.

P – How would you describe femininity?

E – Erm, frilly, pink hahaha, maybe glossy, erm sexy, it's only ever women that are sexy. And all those other things like, erm, kind and submissive and talkative and all the other traditional feminine traits.

P – Do you think that that description is similar, based on similar things to the masculinity, where it's based on traditional ideas.

E – Yeah exactly I mean and neither of those descriptions fit to any woman or man that I know really. Like no one is one, no one is all of those things or all of the other things, everyone is a mix, but when you are pushed to describe somethings it's just easier to fall back on accepted ideas.

P – Do you think you are feminine?

E – I don't know now. I think I have a real problem with femininity and masculinity. Because I don't feel particularly, I don't feel like the feminine that I've just described either, like I really hate pink, I really hate skirts. I went through a phase of wearing skirts and then promptly stopped again and just wear trousers. I wear make-up, I like make-up. I like wearing tight things sometimes.

P – Do you think there's a place for that? For sexy feminine?

E – For girly things? Yeah sometimes I like to paint my nails and do my hair nicely. My friend got me a bodycon dress for Christmas which I've been wearing.

P – What do you wear it with?

E – Oh, it's just black on its own. Oh trainers! Hahaha, sometimes boots, sometimes flat boots! But yeah haha, otherwise trainers and black tights. Like she has the exact same dress and she wears it with bare legs, um. No I don't feel, yeah I don't feel particularly feminine or masculine. I know that doesn't give you options, but what's left. I feel like I'm more feminine than masculine! Haha! I feel like I'm a woman, but I'm not sure if that necessarily lines up with what in my head femininity is, because I'm not like a super girly girl.

P – Is it more of a contemporary idea of femininity?

E – Yeah.

P – What do you think makes an item of clothing feminine?

E – Erm, oh I feel like it's details. There's more *stuff* going on in women's clothes you know. Oh what's that good Lou Taylor quote about every ruffle flounce puff and bow, its Fine and Leopold being really horrible about dress history basically, and I do feel a bit like that with women's clothing that there's just stuff. There's just stuff on it like, there's loads of patterns there's like yeah loads of unnecessary fabric details, pretend pockets. Yeah there's just a lot of, a lot of details and a lot more variety and a lot tighter I suppose.

P – Do you think that fabric contributes to the femininity?

E – Oh I suppose that sheer fabric can be seen as quite, like that sheer floaty fabric what is it? The light viscose or silk...

P – Chiffon

E – Chiffon that's it. Erm, all those kind of bridesmaid's dress, erm bridesmaids dress fabric are particularly seen as feminine. I mean you wouldn't get a man's shirt or suit, I mean you get silk shirts I suppose, but you wouldn't get suiting or shirts in particularly that kind of fabric for men where you do get women's shirts often in that kind of sheer, more floaty, less structured fabric.

P – And even in daywear really as well.

E – Yeah, a couple of the girl's shirts I've got, they're all sheer and really really thin and viscose silk fake chiffon.

P – So talking about what you said about the men's clothing being more practical, so are you saying that the womenswear is not so much?

E – No, I don't find it as practical. I mean, it's kind of practical like I was talking about the bodycon stuff that I have, that's really practical because it's stretchy. Like it's just like a stretchy second skin and you can wear it over leggings and then you can move quite easily. Um, so that's fine, but it's still tight, it still kind of like gets, if you've bought it too tight you still can't like move your arms forward or like reach high spaces! Hahah. Now I'm talking about it I think it's mainly about being cold! Like I'm cold in women's wear! The shirts are really thin and the trousers are really thin and you have to end up wearing thin layers of thermals to keep yourself warm and...

P – It's like when you go out and the guys are always warm!

E – Yeah the guys are always warm. It's like wear a coat or a jacket.

P – So what's the most feminine garment you can think of?

E – Oh, bridesmaids dresses! Dresses I suppose, dresses are traditionally feminine aren't they.

P – Does the femininity of a garment make you want to wear it?

E – No not really. Like, I don't wear things that are pink. All the kind of feminine things I've got are quite plain.

P – Why, do you think that says something that you don't want to say?

E – Yeah. Why don't I wear girly things? I just feel a bit, I feel a bit done up. Like I err towards casual rather than formal, so I feel a bit done up if I wear really girly clothes. And also you get looked at if you wear like feminine, really feminine things like if you wore something tight or low cut or...yeah. Oh and florals! Florals are really feminine! I've got a couple of things of like these floral dresses with peter pan collars, I've got two. And I tried them on the other day and I was like I can't believe I ever wore these like what was I thinking?! I mean literally I put them on and I was like I look ridiculous, I should bin them! Erm, I just don't feel like me, I know it's funny. Because my Mum...maybe it's my Mum! My Mum loves florals, she loves pink, and she always put me in florals and pink as a child. Erm, I just, yeah, so I think it's given me a lifelong aversion to yeah florals and pink....you can't move in dresses, you can't move properly, they get in your way.

P – Is there never a day when you feel like that? That you want to wear something like that? Or an occasion.

E – I mean I wore, like for my wedding, I wore a really structured really... yeah I suppose it is really girly my wedding dress. Erm, it's not floral or pink but like it's very feminine. It's hourglass and you can't move your feet, like you can't move your knees, your knees are pinned together because it's a pencil skirt. You can't sit down because it hurts! Like you have to sit up straight. Haha, it's like really restricted! Um so yeah for formal things I will do but...it's nice to get dressed up sometimes I guess, but it feels more like putting on a costume than like something I'd...

P – So on an occasion like that, whether it's your wedding or somebody else's, that's when you can do it?

E – Yeah, yeah and you have to dig out an event dress to wear. But recently since jumpsuits have got trendy..Haha! I've been wearing jumpsuits!

P – So you feel different when you wear feminine clothing?

E – I just, I mainly feel uncomfortable, like and anxious about how I look because I don't feel particularly comfortable and like there's always something that could go wrong with really feminine things! Like a strap or you have to buy a special bra or like you bend over and it's too short! Or there's just so much anxiety around, especially like event dresses and wedding dresses. There's just more anxiety around if it looks right and if it suits you and if it's your colour and if it suits your shape All of these things that if you're not used to wearing them you don't, you don't really know. So yeah, I mainly feel anxious when I have to get dressed up and look girly and go to a formal event, like um, my brother's wedding were I had to wear...uhhh...a long chiffon pink dress, I was so...it looked so ridiculous and everyone said how nice I looked, but I just...haha...I just didn't feel like me it was awful!

P – So, these are questions about your body. So how do you feel about your female body?

E – Er, it's alright. I quite like it, but as I mentioned I also like to hide it because I have a classic hourglass figure. I'm quite slim, so if I wear something that's tight fitting people just look at you, like people just stare and it's really uncomfortable, so I don't, I don't do it. Um, and I notice when I do, like if I do wear like my maxi dress or if I do wear something that shows off one's figure, like I can just, I don't know if I'm paranoid haha! It's not just men I mean like women stare at me as well so I'd just like rather not be started at so I just wear baggy things or things that...yeah.

P – So you would say that your clothing choice is influenced by your body?

E – Oh yeah for sure! Like when, I have been really very thin and then it was great because you could wear like you could wear girlier things if you have a straight up and down quite slim body because they don't look sexy. So you can wear low cut things and you don't have a cleavage, you can wear things that are tight on your bum and they don't make your bum look massive because you haven't got a bum, so you can wear more feminine things without looking overtly sexy and I really, I really liked that! You can wear shorter things, it was really good um...but then you put the weight back on and everything comes back and you can't wear those things so much anymore. So yeah, for sure. If I had a different body I could wear different things. And it's finding out what suits you so like, that's why I wear body con things because, um only because other things don't fit me because I go in at the waist so much like it's hard to get things that are fitted to actually fit my body like things always pucker at the chest there's gaps at the back in my trousers. So anything that is supposed to look fitted or create an hourglass, anything that creates an hourglass like doesn't fit me because it's too big at the waist and too small on the boob! It just like it doesn't work! Haha!. Um, that's why as well, really girly things don't, they don't fit me.

P – So the size and shape you are at the moment, would you say that you want to defeminise yourself a little bit?

E – Err, yeah I tend to. Yeah especially since...and also practical things like since I started cycling. I've cycled for 5 years. You can't wear anything restrictive or tight. Erm, you can't really do your hair that well because it going to go under a cycle helmet anyway! Erm, all the dirt sticks to your make-up, so there's a lot of things that make you instantly less fem, you can't wear heels because you're cycling so you always wear flats. So there's a lot of things that naturally make you seem less feminine. But yeah actually, with the body con dress, with the new addition of the body con dress because I used to wear them, yeah I had few like last time it was fashionable. So it's like a stretchy long sleeve high neck one. And I just realised that I hadn't worn them for years, like no one ever see's my shape, like I'm always like drowned in too big clothes. I was like no! No I'm going to try! I'm gonna wear this! Yeah, I'm going to accept this body and it will all be fine, and it actually has I have liked wearing that dress and I have felt like quite confident in it. Um, and I thought I might buy more. But that's maybe because I'm older and more secure now, like I'm older, I have a husband, I care less about people, what people think or stare

or. I don't really go out to like, I don't really go to clubs as it were, I just go to the pub with my friends so I'm never, yeah I'm never somewhere where I'd feel uncomfortable I guess. Oh...I'll tell you later...

P – So you say it's high necked and long sleeved?

E – Yes

P – So that must help. Does it help?

E – Yeah it is, it's nice. So, it's a ribbed fabric so it's like kind of stretchy. It kind of hits mid thigh. Yeah and it's high necked and long sleeved but it is skin tight like, yeah it's completely skin tight so you can see the shape of my body, but I always wear it with black tights and um trainers as well.

P – So, possibly to compensate a little bit?

E – Yeah, I mean I wouldn't wear it with bare legs and heels, because that would be a bit Kim Kardashian. It really would.

P – So would you say that you use clothing to change how your body looks or to compliment how your body looks?

E – Er, mostly to change or hide. Like, I didn't think that everything I owned was too big for me, but it genuinely is! Like everything, even the girl's stuff I have is all too big. None of it fits me properly. It's all huge. I never, like looking through my wardrobe to do, this I was like ahh! Nothing...I mean I've got a couple of pairs of tight jeans I guess, but everything else like jumpers and things are all really big. So, yeah I think it's more to hide.

P – Do you think that's to do....Why do you think that is? Do you think it's something specific to females?

E – Oh I don't know. Like the other reason is, I think liking fashion and liking proportion, so having like interesting shaped things. It's like really high fashion things they're never skin tight are they, they're always like interesting cool shapes. So I think that's another reason, that I'm drawn to big, oversized or different shaped things. But yeah I think, um, in fashion shows in general, they're not often about the body they're about the clothes, and how the clothes look and how they fall and how they drape so your body kind of gets, gets in the way of how clothes look. So, like I say with womenswear, your body gets in the way of how it's supposed to look like if you've got boobs where there are not supposed to be boobs or if somethings puckering or if somethings pulling under the arm or if you can't wear your jeans that low because your hips are in the way, like your body is in the way of how that garment is been cut and made to look so it's easier to wear something baggy or bigger because then it just kind of falls over it, it's not interrupting

P – So you said before that when you were thin it was easier to wear clothes.

E – Yeah it was so much easier!

P - So was that because your body isn't in the way?

E – Yeah because everything looked how it was supposed to look! Erm, so yeah I could wear really cool things. I could wear loads of layers without looking big! Haha! Because, there's a picture of me where I know I'm wearing, I'm wearing like, I'm wearing trousers with a big shirt over it, with a jumper and something else and a jacket and I don't look....like I'm sure if I did that now I would feel like enormous! But I didn't look like that. Yeah, it was nice I could wear loads of things that I just, I can't wear now.

P – What do you think about the way in which men's clothing fits your body? We might have covered this a bit.

E – Um, yeah I like it because it's bigger, it's more comfortable. It doesn't cut in to like give you a waist or, um. Men's trousers always fit nicely. What's the question?



P – What do you think about the way in which male gendered clothing fits your body? So how does it make you feel? Such as is it more comfortable?

E – Oh yeah, it's much more comfortable, but I think that's just because it's bigger.

P – But those trousers aren't though.

E – No actually the trousers, the trousers do fit me. They do fit, and I'm surprised they fit because normally men's clothes don't have a big enough bum but these do, they fit really good.

P – Have they got a really low waist?

E – No, they're quite high, yeah, and yeah they've got a lot of space near the bum. Yeah they've just got more room in them, that's why I like them better.

P – So what would you say fit means to you in terms of clothing on your body? If you say something 'fits'.

E – Oh yeah I think me and my husband and friends would have a different opinion of this. So, the things I think fit, they all think things are too big. But I think my Mum's given me that! Like my Mum is a size 10 but because she was a size 12 in the 70's or a size 14 in the 70's, she still buys a size 12 and 14 things. I'm like Mum, and I tell her they are like literally too big for you! She's like oh I don't like tight things! So I'm more like her than I think. So, yeah I think things fit if they're a little big. Again, realised this in the last couple of months, I'm like I'm going to start buying things that fit! I'm going to make a change!

P – Do you feel differently if something's tight? If trousers are tight. How do you feel?

E – I don't mind tight trousers so much as long as they're stretchy, so like skinny jeans. I wear skinny jeans but they're really, really stretchy, so you can move in them. These are a bit tight sometimes to be honest. What's the question? Is it about stuff being tight?

P – Oh yeah, what is fit? So do you feel different if things are tight, so if your clothing is too tight?

E – Yeah I feel more restricted and like anxious and just you literally feel uncomfortable. Like I have some jeans that are high waisted and far too tight and I can't sit down in them, because they hurt my stomach when I sit down! Erm, yeah, just not being able to move about really annoys me.

P – I feel like some people exist in clothes like that.

E – Yeah, oh no they really do. Like a girl I know wears a suit every day and I'm like I don't know how you wear a fitted suit and a fitted shirts. You're just always, always uncomfortable, and heels every day. A life of discomfort.

P – Erm, what about, if clothing is tight do you feel like it's too small, like you're too big?

E – Erm,

P – I just think because that's a common thing with people.

E – No I don't really feel like I'm too big. Oh maybe I do. I don't feel like it in general so I'd never be like oh I'm too fat for this. Like I normally, erm, hone in on a specific body part like, my shoulders are too big for this size eight shirt, because the shoulder seam is like half way down the shoulder, I'm like ugh! Of course if you go up to a size 12 the rest of it's huge. Or like my boobs are too big for this or my bum is too big for this. Or like my thighs are too big to get the stupid trousers over, over the thighs. So it would never be like as a whole, I don't feel like as a whole I'm too big! I just feel like certain parts of me are too big for what they've made.

P – Ok. So we'll talk about what you've worn today. So what have you worn today?

E – So what I've worn today is my, is it Prince of Wales check? Prince of Wales check Topman kind of formal skinny trousers and Voi jeans wool jumper. Its navy and... Prince of Wales, oh no it's not is it

black watch tartan? It's black watch tartan. So it's navy and green and black and a navy jumper with a little gold logo.

P – Why did you choose those?

E – I chose these today because after getting out all of my menswear I had more of a choice than I thought. But I've worn this one because this is the men's outfit that I wear most right now, like over the last 2 years. Erm and I think it looks, I think it looks both smart and casual, because it's not jeans it's trousers, but you can wear it with trainers or I can wear it with brogues. The trousers are really comfy. The jumper I wear mostly because it's really warm because it's wool, and like I said earlier on, it's getting smaller and smaller. So I won't be able to wear it soon because every time I wash it, it gets smaller, and I've only noticed now that it was so big before, that now I'm like oh it actually fits me, like it looks really nice now and it made me realise how baggy it must have been when I was wearing it before! Haha

P – Do you feel comfortable in that clothing?

E – Yeah I feel really comfortable, I feel a bit hot in my jumper right now. The trousers actually can be a bit tight erm, but it depends on how much I've eaten. They're really comfy today.

P – Have they got stretch?

E – Er no, maybe a bit. They're woven, not jersey. Erm but they're comfy...the test is are they comfy enough to cycle in, and they are! So...

P – So did you think about what you were doing today when you got dressed?

E – Yes! So, erm, yeah I planned it. I actually didn't wear these to cycle in, I'll wear them to cycle in later, but that's because it was raining. I didn't want to ruin them.

P – So let's look at what you sent me. Is there a particular item that you are particularly attached to?

E – Erm, oh I really like all of these things. Do I have to pick one?

P – If there's one that you can tell me about? Such that, maybe you've got a favourite?

E – Ah they're all my favourites for different reasons!

P – Is there one that makes you feel particularly different to how you normally feel when you wear clothes?

E – Oh. See one of them is a bit of a cheat. It's a men's shirt that's been made into a girls. I sent you that anyway because it is men's, but it's a girly dress I think. I mean, it's my version of a girly dress. See it's pulled in at the waist. Erm,

P – There's a lot of sportswear.

E – Yeah, there's lots of sportswear. There's mainly, some of it's for festivals, some of it's for around the house, some of it's for summer evenings like. Err the trousers are mainly for around the house, the jackets I wear for both sport and not sport.

P – Why do you choose to wear male gendered clothing? You said because of the comfort, but is it for style and outfit choices? To make things a bit different?

E – I think it's just that I've always really liked baggy jumpers and shirts and it's just useless buying women's versions of baggy jumpers and shirts because they don't, they never fit the same. They're always cut to be womanly and that's not what you want from a baggy jumper or a shirt. You want it to be big, masculine as it were. Erm, so like the denim shirts I wore almost constantly, I nearly wore a denim shirt and my black leggings because I wore that like almost consistently for two or three years I swear. Like always! I realise I haven't worn my denim shirt and black leggings for ages but it's just because I wore it so so much! But it's just really comfy like, yeah it's just really practical and you can

wear it around the house! It's really comfy to wear around the house but then you can go out and it still looks, you still look like you made an effort or you're kind of fashionable. Erm, and also I went, oh I did go through a phase of wearing jumpers, baggy jumpers and pencil skirts. So a lot of the jumpers I used to wear with quite tight pencil skirts.

P – So you're mixing menswear and womenswear.

E – Hmm yes. Yeah and the shirts are always worn with leggings or shorts or something else.

P – So you're wearing the baggy things with the tighter feminine things possibly?

E – Yeah, with some of these things, with others I'm literally in baggy things. No usually if I have one baggy thing I'll have something else tight, as a rule. Unless it's sportswear and I'm at home. But yeah, if I wear a jumper or a shirt I have leggings on, or if I have baggy trousers I'll probably have a tighter top on. It's actually unusual today's outfit, that it's all menswear. But that's cos they go together really well and actually I sometimes I wear these trousers with a black polo-neck which is tight, um, but yeah they go together quite well and now the jumper is smaller I suppose it fulfils the smaller element.

P – So you always wear make-up? Quite a bit of make-up. Always?

E – Now you say always!

P – Is it always?

E - It's only when I'm out of the house. Err I don't, so my make-up lasts me a really long time because I wear it once a week when I come to uni or when I go to work. I feel bad for Tom-Henry actually because he'll say aw never you dress up, well he doesn't actually say it but like when I come back from uni or come back from doing freelance stuff he's like aw you look nice. I'm like aw I feel bad cos it's like I've tried! Tried for the other people!

P – [laughing] Took off your sportswear!

E – Yeah took off my sportswear for 30 seconds or my giant cardigans that he hates! Um, to go out into the world. But when, actually when I worked in a really small office, it was basically a hut! At Shepherds Bush Market, I didn't wear make-up to go to work then, because I was like I'm literally seeing my assistant Sarah, who didn't wear make-up either. So we both just sat there. I did, I started that job taking clothes to change into from cycling and by the end I just sat there in my leggings, like my leggings and a hoodie for the whole day because we weren't customer facing and there was just the two of us and it was in a market. So we didn't really have to, yeah dress up. Yeah she used to wear her Harry Potter hoodie and be like in what I cycled in! So it was actually really embarrassing if people did come in because we were like Hi, we've not dressed up at all! [laughing] Yeah I have stated wearing make-up to the gym because like sometimes it's the only place I go were I've left the house so I'm like I'm going to put a bit of make-up on but not, not like the make-up I've got on today. I'll just put on tinted moisturiser and mascara so I don't look half dead! And so I don't as red after the workouts. Which people have noticed, people are like, you don't look red at all! [laughing] I'm like, hmmm no reason! [laughing]

P – Do you think you can wear more make-up when you wear masculine clothing?

E – Yes, especially I wore, the only time I've worn make-up and red lipstick every single day is when I had all my hair cut off, when I had really short hair like a centimetre of hair all over my head. No hair, zero hair! I had to wear make-up every day because otherwise I looked like a potato! [laughing] It just looked like I had no features! It was awful! It took ages! Like, so yeah I think you can get away with wearing more make-up, and to look done up as well. So if you do want to wear sportswear to say the pub, if you put a lot of make-up on suddenly, and especially red lipstick, suddenly it's a look! And you made an outfit! You haven't just wandered out your house [laughing], in your sportswear and no make-up [laughing], you can't really get away with doing that! Yeah you do, if you wear it without make-up you just look scruffy which is probably my husband's objection to it.

P – So have you always dressed in, what shall we call it, a tomboy kind of way?

E – Um, apart from a brief teenage foray into looking girly from like age fourteen to maybe seventeen err yeah. I was really tomboy as a kid like, wore ripped jeans, baggy jumpers big sportswear t-shirts, tracksuits, anything I could move in. And then my school jumpers were always like three sizes too big for me, really baggy. Always wore, even when I was being girly, I always wore a baggy shirt even though like some girls wore you know those fitted, you know when you got a bit older, in years ten and eleven, people started wearing the fitted shirts. I did not wear those fitted shirts! I always wore like the same age 16 boys shirt that I had been wearing! [laughing] I think me and Joe has the same shirts. Did we have the same shirts? I think Mum just bought boys shirts. I don't think my shirts were ever girl's shirts. Or maybe I did! Actually I'm thinking about it I did fall prey to the fitted shirt thing! I did have one or two. Erm, but yeah just pressure really like. Again, you got more attention from boys, like I realised when I ditched by long pleated skirt for a short one and skin coloured tights. They were like hey here did those legs come from? I was like they've always been there you idiots! Um, so yeah, when you're seventeen your body is all quite new to you so you're all like hey I can show this off and this is what girls wear, and this is what you wear on a night out. This is what you wear on a night out you wear a short skirt and a low cut top and you get a push up bra and you do your hair straight and you put loads of make-up on and that's what you do on a night out. Because that's what everyone looks like on a night out and that's what you wear. Um, so yeah I did that for a while and I didn't like it and I decided I liked rock clubs better and then I could go back to wearing baggy jeans and t-shirts and stuff. And then I moved to London and no one in London wears heels because I mean you can't get on two night busses and the tube in 5 inch heels and a mini skirt! You literally can't so people don't do it. Unless you're rich enough to get a taxi somewhere which I was not as an eighteen year old student! So, um, I find it's a bit more casual than the provinces, as it were. So yeah, then I never had to wear those things again.

P – Do you think that as you've got older or as fashions have changed that you wear more menswear or are more experimental maybe?

E – Um, I think, I dunno. I think it was a happy accident that I worked in a men's department. So I got loads of free menswear, I worked for BHS menswear, and they shared an office with Burton so you could have as much free menswear as you wanted which was great, erm. And then, I mean recently, sportswear's back which is great. Which I really love because I had some Adidas things, anyway it's just been easier to get and more acceptable to wear your tracksuit bottoms out in public! And I think over the last five years especially, fashion has gone much more casual and much more, cos yeah the whole 90's sportswear thing is really big right now, and there's not so much over the top femininity, big boobs...oh well actually unless you count Kimkaye. She wears skin tight things and the whole bum thing.

P – I think there are two very polar opposites.

E – Yeah and all the Instagram girls! Maybe I just don't pay attention, see maybe I'm just not paying attention to it! It doesn't come in, like it doesn't come under my radar [laughing]!

P – Boohoo.com!

E – Oh god yeah...and Missguided. Yeah I think it doesn't affect me because I don't go to those shops, I don't go anywhere where people would be dressed like that, I don't. I would feel super uncomfortable if I was dressed like that, but all that, yeah really skin tight bodycon like party, party dresses. So yeah in my head fashion has become a lot more casual. Ever since normcore, what was that like three or four years ago I kind of just held onto that! I've been like Normcore, [laughing] white shirt, jeans, that's it, you just wear something really ordinary and pretend it's fashionable. Err, so that's the direction my style has gone for sure. Because I used to wear quite loud things, quite a lot of prints, erm, but then that's because I worked for a print studio and I got loads of free really loud printed things, erm so, there's a lot of reasons.

P – We're just going to talk about gender identity. Where do you think you fit on there? On the gender spectrum [shows gender spectrum diagram]

E – Oooh!

P – Here's GI Joe, here's Barbie!

E – Erm, maybe a five. Maybe between a four and a five. Yeah somewhere between a four and a five I think. I like that your number one has got a little hourglass figure and then the little figures get straighter...

P – Yeah

E - ...as they get more masculine. Yeah, see like my worst fear would be to be a number one. I think I could do it, like I could do it quite easily. But I don't.

P – Why don't you? I know it's not your style but is there a reason.

E – I think it's being looked at. I read an article on Kim Kardashian. It was a Vogue staffer who dressed as Kimkaye for the day. Except she didn't really because she's like really tall and really thin and she wore like fashion versions of it. Anyway! So she erm, she did that and she commented that people look at you. She was wearing a leather skirt and a tight top. She was like, people look at me and men offered me drinks and offered me to sit at the bar with them and all sorts of things that she was like would never normally happen in everyday life and it's alright if you're Kim Kardashian because you've got like an army of ten security guards around you at any time, so anyone that comes anywhere near you is going to be like swiftly shut down.. If you're wearing that outfit in public as a woman who doesn't have those security guards, like I'd be worried, I'd be scared!

P – So you think you're vulnerable as a woman if you dress like that?

E – Yeah! Yeah I really think you are. Cause, yeah you, yeah you just get made to feel uncomfortable. Even if no one is going to do anything like physical, you are just made to feel uncomfortable, by like stares or comments or...

P – Do you think people make assumptions about people that dress like that?

E – I think they do, but. I think they do but, you couldn't. I mean it's not even dressing extremely feminine. Like anything, anything that's tight, or anything that isn't like... Yeah I think, yeah people do make assumptions. But I normally make the assumption that people are very confident that dress like that, because you're like, this, this is how I look to wear something like that tight and that feminine I think you have to be quite confident in, in who you are. Yeah, I think those old assumptions are fading away like, like but I think they're probably still there. Which I don't get because it's like you have to be, it's like a set of impossible rules. You have to be feminine but not slutty, it's like well how?? What do you mean how are you going to do both. How are you? So, I think it's really hard.

P – Is it to do with like a more contemporary idea of what woman is or what femininity is? For instance, you're a woman...

E – Yeah!

P - and you are feminine, in ways, so how...

E – Yeah hmm... wait what's the question? About people getting judged?

P – Yeah

E – Dunno.

P - It's like you can't show off your body.

E – Yeah. And people think. I think wearing pink as well. People think like you're a girly girl, but I think people make those associations like princesses and being dim and umm... I think I don't wear pink because I've got blonde hair, and it's just too much to blonde and pink.

P – Could you get away with it more because you've got quite a severe haircut?

E – Pink actually really suits me! Maybe, but I don't like it. I can't wear it.

P – Do you feel like the way you dress is associated closely with the gender identity and where you think you fit?

E – Erm yeah!

P – Erm, do you think this is to do with...is it affected by... |I've got a list of things. Is it affected by your gendered identity, femininity, masculinity, sexuality, personality and also the day and the mood you are in?

E – Um, I think, hmm. I think I dress quite practically which is why I like menswear.

P – So functionality.

E – Yeah I'm often, so like I've said loads, I'm often, like I'm always cold, and I like to be able to move about in my clothes, so a lot of what I end up getting is quite simple and not really fussy. Yeah or just easy to move around in, it's not.... I mean sometimes it's fashion, but I don't really think I look particularly fashionable, but all my friends say that I have like a discernible style, so I guess.

P – You do.

E – I guess I do, but it's not something that I've ever like thought...given loads of thought. I mean I do really like fashion, I read fashion magazines and then acquire things, but it's never like constructed I guess. I've never thought oh I'm going to look like this, it just kind of happens.

P – I think that's the best way.

E – Yeah.

P – Do you think that....I think we've covered this but I'll say it and you can say...Do you think that people perceive you differently in men's clothing?

E – I don't think people notice that I'm wearing men's clothing most of the time. Like I was telling Myna earlier and she was like 'Oh i didn't realise that it was menswear'. So I think that people don't really realise it's menswear because it's on a female body, and you're not entirely in menswear and you're not trying to pass as a man. So I think people don't realise it's menswear...um... I don't know if they treat you differently. Maybe, maybe differently to if you were wearing something really girly, umm, but I don't think...

P - I was suppose the menswear that you wear is menswear, but it could easily pass as womenswear in a lot of ways.

E – Yeah, yeah it's not very obviously men's I don't think, so I don't think people would notice so much...no I don't think so.

P – I've got questions about occasion. We've talked about weddings, what we do there. Erm, what do you think are the reasons for your clothing choices? Such as, are you influenced by the people around you, social groups, family, partners, what kind of work you do?

E – So, yeah my husband. I realised that when I was looking at my menswear that I don't wear alot of it anymore because, erm he doesn't like it. And when first got together he didn't say anything about it probably because he didn't want to be insulting! But it has like slowly come out that all my favourite baggy menswear things he's like, Oh you look like, either you look homeless or like you've rolled around in a charity shop...or [laughing]! Like really mean things about all my favourite clothes [laughing]! So yeah, I've like slowly stopped wearing them, um... which, yeah makes me a little bit sad because I didn't I think I *did* take it on board. I think the bodycon dress again is a oh maybe I'll look a bit nicer, maybe I'll try and look a bit sexy, instead of being swamped by all the clothes I'd just really like to wear. Um, and

yeah friends, that same bodycon dress, I saw my friend wearing it who's got a similar body type to me and I was like 'Ah that looks really nice! Can I have one please?' And she bought me one for Christmas! My Mum, anything my Mum likes, like as a rule I don't like [laughing]. And then work, I dress a bit smarter for work, but I've realised that my version of smart and other people's version of smart is like not the same thing [laughing]. I've got freelance work at a property developer where I used to work and I thought I'd dressed quite smartly because I put on a shirt and blue jeans and trainers and I got there and I was like, still not smart enough Soph, can't wear the jeans [laughing]! But I don't think they mind because they've known me a few years and um, yeah they've known me a few years and they know what I wear and they've never commented on it. Actually, the CEO has commented on it the one time I did wear a black bodycon dress with a belt, he was like oh! You're looking very, made hourglass shape with his hands at me! And I was like this is why I don't wear these things! Going back to my jumpers [laughing]! This is exactly why, I was like right point proved I'm not wearing it again [laughing]. Um, yeah so I will dress a little bit smarter for work. Or if I have an event obviously I will go find a dress. Or now actually I have a couple of plisse dresses, which I've worn to the last two or three weddings live been to and I will be wearing for all foreseeable weddings, because um, they look smart and they're not tight. It's kind of like a blue glittery plisse and they're kind of like square cut, spaghetti straps, pulled in at the waist with some material and then quite a free floaty skirt. So yeah it looks, yeah it looks weddingy, but isn't too tight and isn't like girly or floral or any of the things I don't like about wedding clothes. So, um, you can wear a bra with it because it lines up with the straps. I had that taken in, it was really big, it was like a size 14 or 16, and I took it, I finally like this summer, went and got it taken in. So I've just been wearing it to weddings.

P - So, I just want to ask you some questions about a pilot study that I did. Looking at these pictures, can you tell me if, this one, if you think that this is a men's or women's item? [Shows image of pink vest]

E - Women's, because it's pink and it's small and it's a vest.

P - This one? [Shows image of blue slacks]

E - Erm, mens.

P - Why do you think it's men's?

E - Because they're trousers and they're like suit trousers. But they could also be women's trousers because I got out a pair of trousers that I thought were men's trousers and I looked at the label and it said Topshop and I was like Oh! Oh these are women's oh good! Um, but I would say, like naturally I would say men's.

P - Ok. That one? [Shows pink striped men's shirt with dark blue tie]

E - I would say men's because it's big and it's a shirt and it's got a tie on it.

P - What do you think about ties? Do you think they're...

E - Oh ties are definitely masculine, except weirdly they make you wear them at school. Did you get made to wear them?

P - Umm

E - We got made to wear them, so I can tie a tie. Like the only time I've ever worn a tie is at school. Oh maybe I have....no I've never worn one since.

P - How do you feel when you wear a tie?

E - Weird! Really, really weird, cause I just feel like it's like being at school again.

P - Do you feel smart, or like you're wearing fancy dress or does it make you feel kind of sexy? Or how does it feel?

E – It just reminds me of school. Like it does not feel sexy wearing a tie. Like, they are not sexy garments in my opinion! [laughing] Err, it reminds me of school and like rubbish punk. So like people wearing ties around their heads or like little tiny ties erm. I think, I think I might have tried a shirt and tie with leggings or tights or fishnets. I think I might have tried that outfit once, and it looked awful and I took the tie off and just wore the white shirt. So I've tried, but no ties.

P – Ok, what about this one?

E – They look like girls jeans? But you can't really tell with jeans. There's nothing for scale. I suppose they're quite baggy, they could be men's jeans, but it's hard to tell. They don't look like super girly jeans. It's hard to tell.

P – So it's hard to tell which gender the clothing is for?

E – Yeah

P - Is that with everything or just with a few things?

E – Er, well with, with all of them, because they're like traditionally male items. You wouldn't be able to tell without looking at them, without like looking at the size or seeing how they'd fit you wouldn't be able to tell

P – You mean like the actual physical size rather than the label?

E – Yeah exactly! Yeah and how wide they are or what side the buttons are on, you wouldn't be able to know because women's places do do shirts and as I discovered, trousers that are like menswear inspired, because I suppose menswear inspired is and has been a really big in fashion since like the last 50 years! Since Le Smoking. It's always been seen as like maybe a bit subversive and a bit cool so there's tonnes of jackets and trousers and oversize shirts that creep into women's wear so it's really hard tell, you have to get it out and see who's body it's made for I think.

P – So these ones are the clothing on the model. So can you tell me which model you think is the most feminine, A or B?

E – B, because of the hair.

P – Why do you think that it's just the hair?

E – Long hair.

P – Er, which one now?

E – B, are we still doing most feminine?

P – Yeah

E - Always B.

P – And as you've said, what is your thought process for selecting B both times?

E – Long hair! Because in my head long hair is girly! Which is weird because a lot of men have long hair now, but not that long and not that blonde.

P – Is it anything to do with the comparison as well? So the other option...

E – Yeah, because, I think if the models were more similar looking it would be hard, but you both look quite different so

P – Looking at the clothing in particular, do you think it looks different on each model? So, what I'm trying to get at is, is the model bringing anything of themselves to the clothing?



T – Erm, it looks different on A because bigger shoulders, so it hangs different. Yeah it looks different on the models because their bodies are different.

P – Do you think it's easier to tell which gender the clothing is designed for when its on a person?

E – Erm, no I think it's harder because you can't look at it, like you can't tell I'm wearing menswear today. I mean and I know a lot of boys used to wear skinny jeans because they were skinnier, back when Indy was trendy. Yeah boys used to get Topshop jeans because they were tighter, and you wouldn't know that they were wearing girl's jeans, but then if they took them off you'd be like oh they're wearing girls jeans! That's how they got them so tight of course! So I think it's easier to tell, not off a photograph of it but if you actually had the garment and you could look at it then you might be able to tell. But, it's hard anyway, like I said I was picking out my menswear and some of it I had to check the buttons because I didn't know if it was women's or men's, and some of it I'm still not convinced that I've got it right.

P – So, these photographs are deliberately the same pose, there's no personality. If two people wore the same clothes, do you think that they bring something of themselves to the clothing in terms of their personality and their demeanour and the way that they carry themselves?

E – Erm, if they're wearing exactly the same thing it's really hard. Like with school uniform everyone wears broadly the same thing but people roll skirts, people do their ties differently, people have different jackets, so they find ways to customise that uniform, but if you're the exact same thing in the exact same pose, it's hard to bring, it's hard to see how you'd bring any personality other than like your body and the shape of it and like your hair and how you look already, but that's not really, I don't know if that counts as your personality. Like your make-up maybe, it would look different with different make-up or hair I guess. As it does!

P – Do you think that body shape makes a lot of difference?

E – Yeah, I think body shape makes the mast difference. I'm thinking of when they have you know like, Oh! So and so wore the same...celebrities wore the same dresses to an awards show or whatever. Yeah the real difference is in their body shape and it's quite cool to see designer dresses on different non-model body shapes as well, because sometimes they look really different and you're like Oh! I didn't realise it was the same dress! And other times you're like, they literally look exactly the same. So they've had their hair...maybe they have the same stylist or like whatever hair is trendy that year, they could look really, really similar. So yeah I guess it depends some people could look really different in the same thing and some people could look really similar in the same thing.

P – I've just got a couple of pictures for you to look at together. Erm, this one of guys, and this one. So the comparison is about display of skin. [Hamilton image of men in cutaway suits and shirts, comparative image of women in cutaway evening gowns]

E~ – Oh yeah.

P - So what would you say about those pictures?

E – Oh let me see.

P – They are...

E – They're so weird!

P – It's a demonstration of what menswear would look like if it was cut in the same way as women's eveningwear.

E – Yeah, so the men look ridiculous! Like they look ridiculous, just because you're not used to seeing men dressed like that. I mean to be honest the women look ridiculous as well, especially the one on the left, I remember that outfit ughh. It's just, just awful!

P – But in general, if you think about like the Oscars...

E – Yeah, you'd like you wouldn't, I think it looks ridiculous, but you wouldn't get weird looks as weirder looks in the street if you turned up in the women's one rather than the men's one. I think it's just tradition, like traditionally women show skin, especially at awards shows. Erm, well in the modern day certainly, and men don't, so men's clothes cover. So it's really weird to see like cut out angles.

P – Do you think it's restricted to evening wear though?

E – Errr, no I suppose not. You have your shoulders out in the summer, but men can wear vests. Showing your tummy, men don't...you don't really get crop tops for men. Probably good, probably a good thing. You don't get crop tops for men but men will take their shirt off, so, men will happily wander around with their shirt off in the summer, so I suppose that's skin isn't it. And, I saw there was a big thing about men in shorts in London, like that girls are allowed to wear skirts but men can't wear shorts because it's not smart. So I thought that was a bit unfair.

P – Yeah. Oh I saw that! That guy that came back with his Mum's dress?!

E – Yeah [laughing], it's like fine I'll wear a dress then. Yeah that was really funny. But yeah men's clothes cover, cover more of the person than women's clothes do generally.

P – So it goes back to I suppose the practicality

E – Yeah that is not a practical outfit, that one shouldered shirt.

P – But yet, you would see a woman in the day wearing something like that.

E – I mean you might do, but your shoulder would be cold.

P – Yeah...

E – Yeah, it's just me, you probably would. [Laughing]

P – We wouldn't [laughing]

E – Yeah you would do. I mean I wear, I do wear a crop top. I do, I do wear crop tops. Often with tracksuit bottoms, like sporty spice. But I wear crop tops because I can wear crop tops, and because I'm aware of getting older and that you can't wear crop tops forever. [Laughing]

P – That's it, that's all my questions!

## Appendix A. Pilot interview questions with notes

### The development of clothing concepts in response to analysis of changing gendered social attitudes.

Participant interview – The process will be informal and so will take on a semi structured interview format. Below are some questions which will form the basis of the interview and will provide the core information. This list is by no means exhaustive and is intended to be used as a prompt for discussion, with questions selected from the list as appropriate. It will also serve as a checklist to ensure that the same essential information is gathered from each participant, along with additional information particular to the individual.

#### Masculinity and femininity in clothing

##### **1 - How would you describe masculinity?**

Are your thoughts about masculinity based on contemporary ideas or other influences?

##### **2 - Do you think you are masculine at all?** Tricky, but interesting response from Eva S.

##### **3 - What do you think makes an item of clothing masculine?**

Do you think that fabric contributes to this?

Does shape make a clothing item masculine?

What would you consider to be significant sartorial characteristics of men's clothing?

Are there particular garment types that you see as masculine?

What is the most masculine garment you can think of? X

##### **4 - Does the masculinity of a garment make you want to wear it?** X - change to...What is it about masculine clothing... (finding out what the choice motivations are)

##### **5 - Do you feel different when you wear male gendered items compared to when you wear women's wear?**

Thinking about fit

Thinking about the masculine characteristics of the clothing

##### **6 - How would you describe femininity?**

Are your thoughts about femininity based on contemporary ideas or other influences?

Do you think you are feminine at all?

##### **7 - What do you think makes an item of clothing feminine?**

Do you think that fabric contributes to this?

Does shape make a clothing item feminine?

Are there particular garment types that you see as feminine?

What is the most feminine garment you can think of? X

**8 - Does the femininity of a garment make you want to wear it? X - change to...What is it about feminine clothing...(finding out what the choice motivations are)**

**9 - Do you feel different when you wear female gendered items compared to when you wear menswear?**

Thinking about fit

Thinking about feminine characteristics of the clothing

**Readings of the body in terms of masculine and feminine and how you feel about that.** Use the scan if available.

**10 - How do you feel about your female body? Do you like it?**

**11 - Is your clothing choice influenced by your body?**

**12 - Do you think that clothing choice can make your body look different?**

Less feminine? More feminine? Sexy?

Do you use clothing in this way to change how your body looks?

**Fit**

**13 - What do you think about the way in which male gendered clothing fits your body?**

**14 - What is it about the way a clothing item fits which makes you like it?**

In other words, what does 'fit' mean to you in terms of clothing and your body?

**Choice**

**15 - What have you chosen to wear for this interview today?**

Can you tell me why you chose these items? How do they make you feel?

Do you think that coming to this interview was a factor in your decision making when you got ready today?

**16 - Can you tell me anything about the items on the images you sent me?**

Can you tell me anything about them, such as how you feel when you wear them.

**17 - Why do you think you choose to wear items of male gendered clothing sometimes?**

Do you do it purely to achieve a fashion look, or for another reason?

How does wearing men's clothing make you feel in general?

How do you think adding male gendered items to your outfit enhances it? Are you trying to achieve a particular look?

What do you notice about the way in which you use male gendered clothing? For example, do you wear a full outfit, one or two pieces together or just one key item? (Compensatory femininity/masculinity)

**Compensatory femininity –**

**18 - Do you style yourself differently when you wear men's clothing?**

Thinking about hair, make-up, accessories or anything else.

**19 - Can you tell me about your uploads on the fb page?**

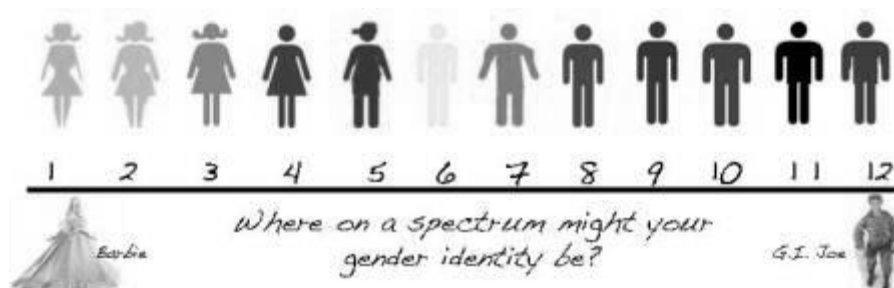
Such as where you were going and how you felt in the clothing.

**20 - Have you always dressed this way?**

Has anything changed during the time that you have been wearing the men's clothing, such as the amount, frequency, combinations that you wear or your life situation/work?

**Identity**

**21 - Where would you put yourself on this scale?** (Based on the answer discuss femininity and masculinity in terms of gender and how the participant feels that they respond to their gender identity through clothing) X I'm taking this out... I kept it in as the scale was amusing



for the participant, but still made them think about their gender identity as compared to stereotypes.

**22 - Do you feel that the way in which you dress is linked to your gender identity?**

How do you do this? Gendered identity. Femininity. Masculinity. Sexuality. Personality. Day. Mood.

**23 - Do you think that you behave differently when you wear male gendered clothing?**

**24 - Do you feel more or less feminine when you wear male gendered clothing?**

**25 - Do you think that people have preconceptions about women who wear men's clothing?**

How does this impact on your choice to wear men's clothing?

**26 - Do you think that people perceive you differently in men's clothing?**

Does this influence how you dress?

**27 - Do you feel like you 'fit in' in this clothing?**

Everywhere or just in some places?

Are you trying to stand out?

Are you trying to say something about yourself or how you would like to be viewed?

**Occasion**

**28 - Do you think that you dress differently depending on the occasion or company?**

Can you explain how you do this?

## 29 - What do you think are the reasons for these clothing choices?

Are you influenced by the people around you? Social groups, family, partners, work family.

Can you identify particular occasions when you would choose to wear items of male gendered clothing?

**Photography pilot X** I may take this out, but definitely amend. If this stays in, focus should be on the finding about clothing off the body being confusing for gender assignment.

**Clothing on and off the body.** ( Images below)

**(30)** Off the body - 4 images A-D. Tell me which garments you think are made for a male body. Do you find it easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for when it is not on a model? Do you perceive the clothing differently when it is not on the body?

**(31)** On the body – 2 images E-F. Which model is the most feminine? Why? What is your thought process? Do you think that the clothing looks different on each model? Is it easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for?

**(32)** Do you think that clothing looks different on different people, regardless of their body shape? Thinking about the person's personality, confidence and demeanour.

**Display of skin.** James Hamilton image and revealing evening dresses image.

**(33)** What do you think about these images?

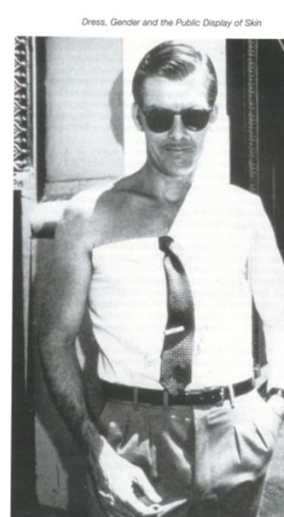


Figure 12.7 'The Off-Shoulder Shirt' from Philip Garner's Better Living Catalogue (photographer James Hamilton, 1962: 30).

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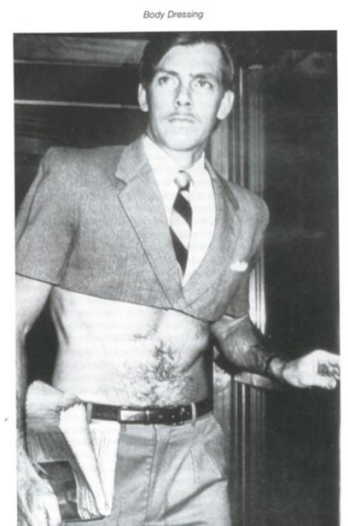
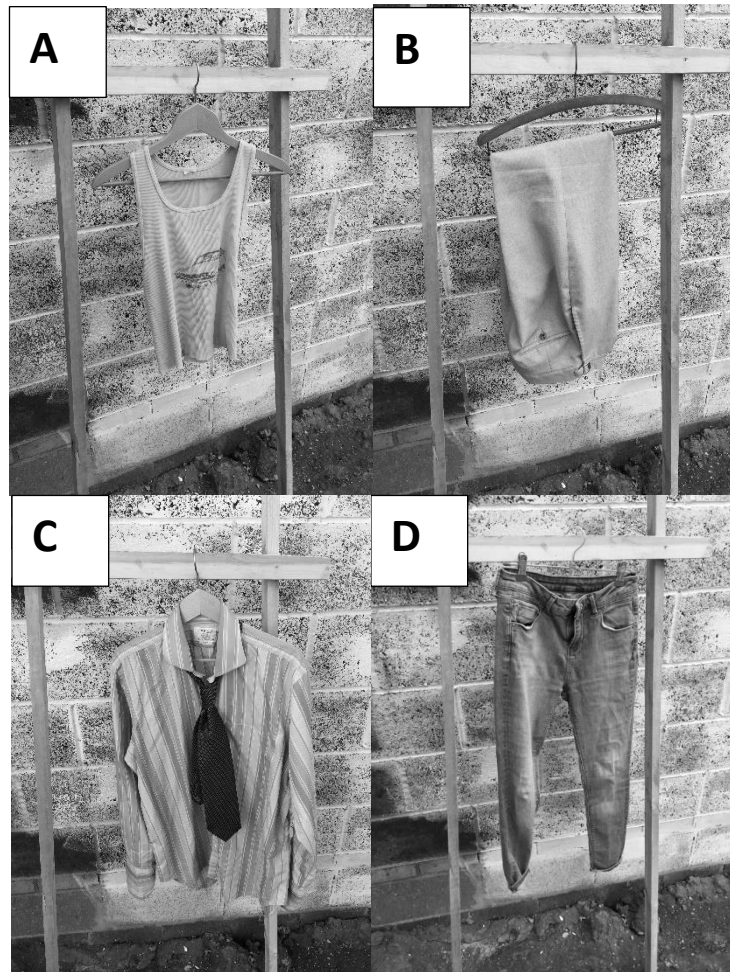


Figure 12.6 'Half-Suit' from Philip Garner's Better Living Catalogue (photographer James Hamilton, 1962: 30).

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## Appendix A. Question list showing changes from the pilot interview to the main study.

The questions in order as for the main interviews; numbers in red represent the pilot numbering.

### Choice

- 1 - 15 - What have you chosen to wear for this interview today?
- 2 - 16 - Can you tell me anything about the items on the images you sent me?
- 3 - 19 - Can you tell me about your uploads on the fb page?
- 4 - 4 – What is it about these clothes that makes you want to wear them?
- 5 - 5 - Do you feel different when you wear these male gendered items compared to when you wear women's wear?
- 6 - 17 - Why do you think you choose to wear items of male gendered clothing?
- 26 - Do you think that people perceive you differently in men's clothing?
- 27 - Do you feel like you 'fit in' in this clothing?

### Compensatory femininity

- 7 - 18 - Do you style yourself differently when you wear men's clothing?

### Occasion

- 8 - 28 - Do you think that you dress differently depending on the occasion or company?
- 29 - What do you think are the reasons for these clothing choices?
- 9 - 3 - What do you think makes an item of clothing masculine?

### Fit

- 10 - 14 - What is it about the way a clothing item fits which makes you like it?

### Body

- 11 - 10 - How do you feel about your female body?
- 12 - 11 - Is your clothing choice influenced by your body?



13 - 12 - Do you think that clothing choice can make your body look different?

### **Masculinity and femininity**

14 - 1 - How would you describe masculinity?

15 - 2 - Do you think you are masculine at all?

16 - 6 - How would you describe femininity?

17 - 24 - Do you feel more or less feminine when you wear male gendered clothing?

### **Gender Identity**

18 - 21 - Where would you put yourself on this scale?

19 - 22 - Do you feel that the way in which you dress is linked to your gender identity?

20 - 20 - Have you always dressed this way?

### **Photography pilot**

#### **Clothing on and off the body.**

21-23 – (30-32)

Pilot interview questions and related changes for the main interviews.	
Question issue.	Changes.
Questions 1-3 about Masculinity and femininity were hard to answer and confrontational.	These questions were moved to positions later in the interview. Allowing the participant time to settle into the interview setting, they would feel more at ease to consider the question or talk it through without feeling pressured to produce an immediate answer.
Which questions will ease the interviewee into the interview?	Questions about the interviewee's photographs of their own outfits were moved to the start of the interview. The way they choose to dress was the reason for the participant answering the call, therefore asking about this at the start of the interview is logical. Additionally it enables the women to talk about something familiar, which would put them at ease.
Question 33 about 'Display of skin' is clunky.	Ideas about showing the skin are interesting for gendering of clothing; however, during the interview this question seemed to force the issue using imagery. This question was removed.
Phrasing of some questions is too closed. Eg. Q4.	Questions should be open, encouraging the participant to discuss at length. An example is Q4. Original - Does the masculinity of a garment make you want to wear it? Revised- What is it about these clothes that makes you want to wear them?
Phrasing of some questions makes them hard to address. Eg. Q13.	Using questions in an interview exposed where phrasing could be improved. For example in Q13 it is unclear what the interviewer is asking of the interviewee - What do you think about the way in which male gendered clothing fits your body? The question was removed, as the topic was adequately covered by Q14 - What is it about the way a clothing item fits which makes you like it?
Some questions overlapped. Eg. Q5 and 9	Overlap was noticed in some questions and these were edited, for example Q's 5 and 9. Q5, Remaining- Do you feel different when you wear these male gendered items compared to when you wear womenswear. Q9, Removed - Do you feel different when you wear female gendered items compared to when you wear menswear?

## Appendix A. Participant enquiry main study. Clothing diary introductory email.

Hello everyone,

Thanks for getting involved!

I will be setting up the Facebook closed group for you all to start the clothing diary. I hope you are all on Facebook, if not let me know, maybe you could send me emails. I have used the fb group for this purpose before. It works really well in terms of data gathering for me and has proved to be really fun, social and supportive for the group. My fb link is below so you can add me.

<https://www.facebook.com/701167165>

Only the people in the group will see the content, I will not share on fb. Images will likely be used in the writing up of the work however. I will forward copies of the consent forms for you to read when I have set up the group, and I will bring hard copies for you to sign when we meet for the interview. If everyone is happy to, I would like you to upload images of what you are wearing with a brief description of what is menswear/ women's and what your day entails, such as work, party, etc. This should be daily if you can manage it! Obviously, it's cool if you miss days, it will just give me a better picture of your style the more info I have.

I will arrange interview times with you all individually as everyone has a busy schedule. These will be starting from week beginning 12th March, as i need I do some work on my practice in the coming week or so.

Please do pass on the call to anyone who you think would be suitable! Staff, students, friends. I need about 4 more people. As I get more participants (positive thinking!)you will see them pop up in the group.

Any questions just ask :)

Cheers  
Philippa

## Appendix A. Participant enquiry main study interview questions.

### **The development of clothing concepts in response to analysis of changing gendered social attitudes.**

Participant interview – The process will be informal and so will take on a semi structured interview format. Below are some questions which will form the basis of the interview and will provide the core information. This list is by no means exhaustive and is intended to be used as a prompt for discussion, with questions selected from the list as appropriate. It will also serve as a checklist to ensure that the same essential information is gathered from each participant, along with additional information particular to the individual.

#### **Choice**

##### **15 - What have you chosen to wear for this interview today?**

Can you tell me why you chose these items? How do they make you feel?

Do you think that coming to this interview was a factor in your decision making when you got ready today?

##### **16 - Can you tell me anything about the items on the images you sent me?**

Can you tell me anything about them, such as how you feel when you wear them.

##### **19 - Can you tell me about your uploads on the fb page?**

Such as where you were going and how you felt in the clothing.

##### **4 – What is it about these clothes that makes you want to wear them?**

##### **5 - Do you feel different when you wear these male gendered items compared to when you wear women's wear?**

Thinking about fit

Thinking about the masculine characteristics of the clothing

What do you notice about the way in which you use male gendered clothing? For example, do you wear a full outfit, one or two pieces together or just one key item? (Compensatory femininity/masculinity)

##### **17 - Why do you think you choose to wear items of male gendered clothing?**

Do you do it purely to achieve a fashion look, or for another reason?

How does wearing men's clothing make you feel in general?

How do you think adding male gendered items to your outfit enhances it? Are you trying to achieve a particular look?

Are you trying to say something about yourself or how you would like to be viewed?

##### **26 - Do you think that people perceive you differently in men's clothing?**

Does this influence how you dress?

##### **27 - Do you feel like you 'fit in' in this clothing?**

Everywhere or just in some places?

Are you trying to stand out?

Are you influenced by the people around you? Social groups, family, partners, work family.

### **Compensatory femininity –**

#### **18 - Do you style yourself differently when you wear men's clothing?**

Thinking about hair, make-up, accessories or anything else.

### **Occasion**

#### **28 - Do you think that you dress differently depending on the occasion or company?**

Can you explain how you do this?

#### **29 - What do you think are the reasons for these clothing choices?**

Can you identify particular occasions when you would choose to wear items of male gendered clothing?

#### **3 - What do you think makes an item of clothing masculine?**

What would you consider to be significant sartorial characteristics of men's clothing?

Do you think that fabric contributes to this?

Does shape make a clothing item masculine or feminine?

Are there particular garment types that you see as masculine or feminine?

### **Fit**

#### **14 - What is it about the way a clothing item fits which makes you like it?**

In other words, what does 'fit' mean to you in terms of clothing and your body?

### **Body**

#### **10 - How do you feel about your female body?**

Do you like it?

#### **11 - Is your clothing choice influenced by your body?**

#### **12 - Do you think that clothing choice can make your body look different?**

Less feminine? More feminine? Sexy?

Do you use clothing in this way to change how your body looks?

### **Masculinity and femininity**

#### **1 - How would you describe masculinity?**

#### **2 - Do you think you are masculine at all?**

#### **6 - How would you describe femininity?**

Do you think you are feminine at all?

#### **24 - Do you feel more or less feminine when you wear male gendered clothing?**

### **Gender Identity**

**21 - Where would you put yourself on this scale?** (Based on the answer discuss femininity and masculinity in terms of gender and how the participant feels that they respond to their gender identity through clothing) Show chart.

**22 - Do you feel that the way in which you dress is linked to your gender identity?**

How do you do this?

Don't list these! Gendered identity. Femininity. Masculinity. Sexuality. Personality. Day. Mood.

**20 - Have you always dressed this way?**

Has anything changed during the time that you have been wearing the men's clothing, such as the amount, frequency, combinations that you wear or your life situation/work?

### **Photography pilot**

#### **Clothing on and off the body.**

**(30)** Off the body - 4 images A-D. Tell me which garments you think are made for a male body. Do you find it easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for when it is not on a model? Do you perceive the clothing differently when it is not on the body?

**(31)** On the body – 2 images E-F. Which model is the most feminine? Why? What is your thought process? Do you think that the clothing looks different on each model? Is it easy to tell which gender the clothing is designed for?

**(32)** Do you think that clothing looks different on different people, regardless of their body shape? Thinking about the person's personality, confidence and demeanour.

## Appendix A. Participant enquiry interview analysis.

Themes and changing of themes.

Fun – Could fun be separated into fun with clothing in the process of dressing and choice, and humour regarding one's own body. Split into,

1 - 'Enjoyment in dressing and fun in clothing choice' or 'dressing and preferences' and 'humour regarding one's own body shape'. The latter could come under body.

Enjoyment in dressing could also include proportions in clothing as this is a dressing technique.

Occasion/event – dressing appropriately – this could be under dressing and preferences theme.

Split this into the appropriate sections. – Language – can this be split into the themes within which the data fits? Such as body? Much of the language around clothing is directly linked to body and the size of the clothing. Or it is to do with proportions and the contrasts.

Proportions in clothing

2 - Body

Participants image style – Is this really a theme? Or should I create a separate discussion for the style and fashion thinking of the women? Fashion influences could contain all of the ideas from here that relate to motivation. Maybe this type of information comes under dressing techniques and preferences. Fashion influences could contain all of the ideas from here that relate to motivation.

3- Just a piece of clothing – shapes. To do with clothing and shapes, not men's/womenswear.

4 - Trends and influences – is this motivations? This would then correlate directly with my aims. No. Influences could contain comfort, practicality etc. All of the themes are motivations in a way. Design thinking could be an influence.

Social and cultural – This could be included in influences.

Comfort – can this be combined with practicality? Both are motivation. To do with practicality of clothing and this as a motivational aspect of women's clothing choice. So could this come under the heading of 'dressing and preferences'?

5- Menswear – Can these be under gendered clothing? This could then include 'Just a piece of clothing' maybe? Maybe not to include 'a piece of clothing' as this also includes shapes.

The menswear and womenswear themes have aspects to do with sartorial details such as the cut of the clothing, which seems to be separated from the masculine and feminine discussion.

Womenswear

Practicality – combine with comfort.

Femininity - Masculinity Can these be one theme? Under gender.

6 – Gender – Could this theme also include gendered clothing?

7 - Individual style – general. This is ideas about what makes clothing look good on someone and how people can look good in some things not others. Could be incorporated as discussion in theme 1?...no because this theme should include aspects of gender expression through clothing, therefore it should be a theme in its own right.

Design thinking – could come under influences.

So reworked themes could be

**1 - 'Dressing techniques and preferences'** - To include dressing techniques, proportions in clothing, practicality, enjoyment of the clothing selection process and specifics of language to do with scale and contrasts in clothing. Occasion/event – dressing appropriately. This can include aspects of the participants' personal style and other aspects will be included within the individual style theme.

To do with all aspects of selection and styling of clothing. This will cover the participants' personal style, how this is created using clothing and styling techniques and also the way in which occasion or company is seen to impact the suitability of clothing for the participants. The theme will group similarities but embraces the differentiation within these similar styles, it will also highlight stand out individuality. Preferences are linked to motivations here and so the theme will encapsulate this.

**2 – Body** – To include body commentary from the participants, humour regarding one's own body shape and the specifics of language used to express feelings towards 'body.'

To do with the way in which the participants view and critique their body. The theme focusses on the way in which participants' may use clothing to 'correct' or 'enhance' areas of their body and also what this means for the wearing of male gendered clothing.

**3- Just a piece of clothing** – includes shapes also. So to do with clothing and shapes, not men's and womenswear. A discussion on shapes on the body rather than men's and women's clothing.

To do with clothing seen as shapes for the body and not men's or womenswear, and how these shapes work on different bodies. Thinking about unisex styles also.

**4 - Trends and influences** –To include information from 'design thinking', 'Social and cultural' and motivational aspects from 'participants image/style'.

To do with the outside influences which are seen to impact upon the participants ideas about clothing and directly their clothing choices. These may be social and cultural aspects such as stereotypes, or may be to do with job role or upbringing.

**5 – Gender** - To include femininity & masculinity. Objectification, self-discrepancy.

To do with the way in which the participants see themselves in terms of gender and how this may impact of their clothing choices. Also thinking about masculinity and femininity, focusing on what these are and how the participant feels they can associate with these terms to do with themselves and to do with clothing.

**6 - Gendered clothing** – To include themes, 'menswear' and 'womenswear'

To do with sartorial observations of menswear and womenswear, to include fabrics.

**7 - Individual style and expression of gendered identity.**

To do with general ideas about what makes clothing look good on someone and how people can look good in some clothes and not others. Also to include any similarities seen in the style of the participants and any stand out looks. More specifically to this PhD this theme will consider how clothing can aid in the expression on gendered identity.

10-08/18

I have rearranged some of the themes. Some were overlapping and others the content did not quite fit.

So reworked themes could be

**1 - 'Dressing techniques and internal influences'** - To include, how proportions in clothing are used, enjoyment of the clothing selection process and specifics of language to do with scale and contrasts in clothing. Practicality, comfort. Occasion/event – dressing appropriately.



**2 – Body** – To include body commentary from the participants, humour regarding one’s own body shape and the specifics of language used to express feelings towards ‘body.’

To do with the way in which the participants view and critique their body. The theme focusses on the way in which participants’ may use clothing to ‘correct’ or ‘enhance’ areas of their body and also what this means for the wearing of male gendered clothing.

**3- Just a piece of clothing** – includes shapes also. So to do with clothing and shapes, not men’s and womenswear. A discussion on shapes on the body rather than men’s and women’s clothing.

To do with clothing seen as shapes for the body and not men’s or womenswear, and how these shapes work on different bodies. Thinking about unisex styles also.

**4 - External influences** –To include information from ‘design thinking’, ‘Social and cultural’

To do with the outside influences which are seen to impact upon the participants ideas about clothing and directly their clothing choices. These may be social and cultural aspects such as stereotypes, or may be to do with job role or upbringing.

**5 – Gender** - To include femininity & masculinity. Objectification, self-discrepancy.

To do with the way in which the participants see themselves in terms of gender and how this may impact of their clothing choices. Also thinking about masculinity and femininity, focusing on what these are and how the participant feels they can associate with these terms to do with themselves and to do with clothing.

**6 - Gendered clothing** – To include themes, ‘menswear’ and ‘womenswear’

To do with sartorial observations of menswear and womenswear, to include fabrics.

**7 - Individual style and expression of gendered identity.**

To do with general ideas about what makes clothing look good on someone and how people can look good in some clothes and not others. Also to include any similarities seen in the style of the participants and any stand out looks. More specifically to this PhD this theme will consider how clothing can aid in the expression of gendered identity. To include the participants’ personal style. To do with all aspects of selection and styling of clothing. This will be a log of the participants’ personal style. The theme will group similarities but embraces the differentiation within these similar styles, it will also highlight stand out individuality.

External influences – social and cultural is now just Gay. The upbringing theme became too thin.

<p>Eva W – Sustainability and buying quality clothing.</p>	<p>77-80. I am quite interested in that fact that there’s a sustainability in what you buy and you can keep, I mean I just have about five different work wear jackets! (Laughs) But I can interchange them and they last and it’s not a throw away sort of style and I’m sure I’ll still be wearing these things when I’m in my seventies!</p> <p>106-8. But those shirts really last and I will wear them in a way that I really enjoy wearing them. I enjoy the feeling of the cut of them and the sort of style of them and I sort of do feel that they’re key in my sort of little outfits.</p>	<p>Thinking about the wear ability of a garment and how it makes the wearer feel. This can be attributed to actual comfort to do with the smoothness of the seams or the fabric and the cut. Also considering the aspirational aspect of the rand and the desirability of this</p>
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		expensive and quality item for the wearer.
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Is this a quality and sustainability theme? I don't think any of the participants are fast fashion people which could be an overriding theme. Consider quality and cost? SP is unique in the group as she has expressed that she is happier to spend more on clothing and shop less often. This may be the case for some others such as Jessica and Emily, however is not the case for the rest of the group who are interested in vintage for difference and cheapness. Noelle is the only participant who has indicated Primark as one of her main shopping locations, Noelle's priorities are modesty and cheapness.

Move dressing for age to 7 - individual style and expression of identity. Really it is only SP who expresses age as a strongly influential factor. Age. 'I sort of when I, it's probably daft really, but I thought I'm thirty I'm not going to wear crop tops anymore! (Laughs)' (Emily).

For two women age has begun to be a motivational factor in clothing selection, 'you know I'm fifty three and I do associate a release of not feeling, I think you dress for your own self and your own attraction and your own sort of definition of yourself and I've always been interested in style over sort of trying to be fashionable.' (Eva W)

'I'll wear something that's very loud and very noticeable, but it will often make sure it covers varicose veins and that it covers the cleavage and the tops of my arms and things have got a little bit more of cover all because I think that's dressing for your age as well.' (Eva W.).

'I feel a massive release, I feel like as a younger woman you're hampered, I personally feel less hampered, less sort of oh driven by the need to feel sexualised. I feel much more released now that I don't have to, I don't feel that that's a sort of part of me as much and I don't feel it then defines my day.' (Eva W.)

'I mean not that I'm saying people can't wear crop tops at any age but I think I sort of became conscious of it...' (Emily).

## Appendix A. Participant enquiry

### Interview consent form.

Name of researcher- Philippa Jackson philippa.jackson@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Course - PhD.

Institution - Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Fashion Institute, Cavendish Building, Cavendish Street, Manchester, M15 6BH.

**Title of Project: The development of clothing concepts in response to analysis of changing gendered social attitudes. (interview)**

**Name of Researcher: Philippa Jackson**

**Participant Identification Code for this project:**

**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated .... for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the procedure.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason to the named researcher.
3. I understand that my responses will be sound recorded and used for analysis for this research project.
4. I understand that my sound recorded evidence will not be passed to a third party.
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.
6. I understand that at my request a transcript of my interview can be made available to me.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

*Once this has been signed, you will receive a copy of your signed and dated consent form and information sheet by post.*



## Participant enquiry

### Photographic documentation consent form.

Name of researcher - Philippa Jackson philippa.jackson@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Course - PhD.

Institution - Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Fashion Institute, Cavendish Building, Cavendish Street, Manchester, M15 6BH.

<b>Title of Project: The Development of Clothing Concepts in Response to Analysis of Changing Gendered Social Attitudes. (photographic documentation)</b>			<input type="text"/>
<b>Participant Identification Code for this project:</b>			<input type="text"/>
<b>Please initial box</b>			<input type="text"/>
1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated .... for above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the procedure.			<input type="text"/>
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason to the named researcher.			<input type="text"/>
3. I understand that photographs and audio visual recording will be taken, whilst wearing garments of my own or those provided by the researcher.			<input type="text"/>
4. I understand that photographs, audio-visual and transcripts, may be used freely by the author to publish, present and post online for purposes related to the work.			
5. I understand that photographs, audio-visual and transcripts will not be passed to a third party. I agree to take part in the above research project.			
6. I understand that at my request copies of photographs can be made available to me.			<input type="text"/>
Name of Participant	Date	Signature	
Researcher	Date	Signature	
<i>To be signed and dated in presence of the participant</i>			
<i>Once this has been signed, you will receive a copy of your signed and dated consent form and information sheet by post.</i>			

## Participant enquiry

### Clothing fitting consent form.

Name of researcher - Philippa Jackson philippa.jackson@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Course - PhD.

Institution - Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Fashion Institute, Cavendish Building, Cavendish Street, Manchester, M15 6BH.

<b>Title of Project: The development of clothing concepts in response to analysis of changing gendered social attitudes.(clothing fitting models)</b>		
<b>Participant Identification Code for this project:</b>		
<b>Please initial box</b>		
1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated .... for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the procedure.		
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason to the named researcher.		
3. I understand what is involved in the process of acting as a clothing fitting model.		
4. I understand that my responses will be sound and visually recorded.		
5. I understand that my responses sound, video and photography evidence may be freely used by the author to publish, present and post online for exhibition of the work.		
6. I understand that sound, video and photography evidence will not be passed to a third party.		
7. I agree to take part in the above research project.		
8. I understand that at my request copies of recorded media and photographs can be made available to me.		
_____ Name of Participant	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Researcher	_____ Date	_____ Signature
<i>To be signed and dated in presence of the participant</i> <i>Once this has been signed, you will receive a copy of your signed and dated consent form and information sheet by post.</i>		

## Appendix B.

Archival fieldwork findings. Measurements and observations of sartorial characteristics in Victorian men's shirts.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Front length from front neck	820	770	910	890	880	910	870		875	750	875	
Back length, measured from front neck	880	880	990	950	940	950	920		875	783	940	
Width at chest	620				front 640, back 740		595	530	Almost the same as the hem	590	650	
Width at hem	700	640	550 at the front, back wider	630		750		570	820		735	
Sleeve to cuff		540	580	550		535	530	542	510	520	575	
Cuff		70	75	70	52	75	55	72		45	88	
Armhole flat measurement				245	216	246	270	200	212	215	240	
Bib length	320	315	350	327	400		300	335	260	345	375	
Bib width	205, base	240, mid	200, base	210	185		215	220	128 at base	210 at base	290	
Collar stand depth		15	22	16	19	68	25(complete - 40 back, 61 widest at front)	21(back), 14(front)	58	28	27(back), 15(front)	
Side vent depth	360		400	340		290	250	240		280	250(to front)	
Gathers	Cuff and back yoke	cuff	At back V and cuffs	cuff	Top armhole, cuff, back yoke.	Neck, collar, sleeve head	Shoulder, cuff, back.	no	Deeply gathered. Side of bib(very regular and tiny). Cuff and heavy at the back directly into neck.	Cuff and heavily at the back into yoke	To back only into shallow yoke	
pleats	Box type to ends of bib at base	Box at cb to yoke	Box type to ends of bib at base	Box pleat cb	box to ends of bib at base	Cuff	Box to ends of bib at base	Box to cb	no	box pleats to base of bib at sides. Decorative pleated bib.	box pleat to centre of bib at base	
Decorative	Box pleat bib		Broderie Anglaise bib		Pin and pen tuck with embroidery at bib		Ruffle bib		Pin tucked bib	Pleated bib		
Gussets	Side.	side	side and back opening	side	Side and cuff	Armpit, front neck, side, cuff.	Side and cuff	side vents	Deep armpit gusset, cuff and side vents	side vent and cuff	side vent(heavily constructed on the reverse)	
Reinforcement	No	no	No	No	Curved on armhole/shoulder front and back	Square to front and back shoulder. Wedges at the neck(shoulder)	Front and back double layered to waist		no	Curved support to armhole/shoulder at front and back.		
Stiffening	No	Bib and cuffs	No	Bib and cuffs	No	no	no	Bib and cuffs	no	no	no	
Square cut	No	No	No	No	No	yes	Yes	no	yes	no	no	
Collar	Complete	Detached	Detached, closed at front.	Detached	Detached, opens at the back	Stand collar no attachment, double button	Complete	detached	deep stand with 2 buttons. Does not take a detachable collar.	detachable	detachable	
Yoke	Yes, shallow at the back and cb seam	Yes, with cb seam and tape.	Yes, just visible at front, deep v at back and back button opening	Yes, with cb seam and tape.	Yes, with cb opening/buttons	No, just triangular support at collar/shoulder	Yes with cb seam	Yes, with cb seam and tape	Narrow strip along shoulder and triangular support at collar/shoulder	Yes, fairly even front and back. Cb seam.	Yes, shallow at the back	
Fabric	Stripe				White cotton linen	Linen	Cotton	White cotton	White linen	White cotton	White cotton	

A selection of the images from the A.J. Munby collection, viewed at the Wren Library, Cambridge.



A selection of the images from the A.J. Munby collection, viewed at the Wren Library, Cambridge.





## Appendix B. Participant profiles and interview transcriptions.



### Participant profile. Ella

Monki. Paloma Wool. Alexa Chung.  
H&M. Vintage. Levis. Dr Martens.  
Birkenstocks.

***'It's comfortability I think, I just don't, I don't feel comfortable in myself going outside with this skirt and then putting like a crop top on, erm having really lovely hair and make-up and high heels or whatever'.***

T-shirts. Baggy bottoms. Boxy shapes. So it fits my waist. Work shirt kind. Boxier jacket. Work jackets. Stripes. Spots. Pattern clashing. Sleeves over my hands. Like who is going to see me that day. Tactile person, I have to feel fabric. Loose fitting. Oversized dresses. Slow it down a bit (Paloma Wool). Following trends and stuff which and try and avoid to do.

Gender scale 6-7...I think, I think when I go into uni and see some of the girls in my class at uni, I would then put myself further on the scale typically. Contrast. This necklace, rings, colourful socks on. Age 22.

Ella is a final year Fashion Design Technology student specialising in menswear and her knowledge in this area gives her a perception of menswear as better quality. She finds that menswear is 'more considered' (ELLA) and functional in terms of design, and identifies the use of pockets over men's and womenswear as an example. She finds the way in which menswear works with her own body to be 'a lot more relaxed, but still quite cool' (ELLA). She finds womenswear wear to be demanding, such that 'you need to have this, this, this and this', whereas menswear is seen to offer freedom of use and greater interpretation for your own needs.

Ella doesn't like 'feeling overdressed or girly', as an example she finds showing too much skin when wearing a dress to be 'more dressy' and 'too feminine'. ELLA dresses simply, often in high waisted mom jeans and a jumper, she wears dresses and skirts yet styles them in such a way as to 'bring it back' (ELLA), and not be too feminine. She enjoys this challenge of making clothing work for her own style, finding fashion to be fun. As a general rule, ELLA doesn't wear tight fitting clothing and uses menswear for less fitted t-shirts, sweatshirts, shirts, jackets, trousers and jumpers. ELLA enjoys the way in which she can create contrasts using clothing, this focus for dressing forms the basis for her style. 'I don't know I just really like the play on having a smaller frame and wearing boxier items. It's like wearing work jackets that aren't shapely, but then having trousers like this that cinch me in a bit. I like having a bit of a contrast going on when I wear clothing' (ELLA).

## Ella interview transcription.

P – Ok. So there you go you can flick through on the arrows are the bottom there. If you can just talk about what you're wearing on there

E – So this one, the t-shirt's women's wear. It's Alexa Chung's range when it first came out, I just really like her style so I wanted to get something, but like all the dresses and stuff were really expensive so I went for a t-shirt. It's quite fitted, which is quite different for me t-shirt wise. When I was growing up, like teenager and started charity shopping, I tended to go for really baggy t-shirts and then as I've got a bit older realised that they're not as flattering, but I still wanted, I just really like t-shirts. So I've tried to go for something a bit more fitted and I've now gone baggier bottoms rather than fitted bottoms so I've sort of swapped over. So t-shirt women's and the bottoms are the ones I've got on today which are like vintage men's army cargo pants. Because I tend to buy, I don't shop on the high street that often. If I do, it tends to be for underwear, basics that kind of thing. I don't find a lot of things are worth the money, so I tend to buy more vintage. So a lot of my stuff is from vintage shops or we go to flea markets, I tend to buy, that's where these trousers are from.

P – They fit really well though don't they?! Do they fit on your waist as well?

E – They were really big so I put like elastic in the back of them, so it fits my waist and then I'll wear a belt as well. So, if I really like them, I've got another pair of jeans that I've put elastic in the back just so that they fit better, because I do have a smaller waist. And then if I'm buying men's clothes, that's why I tend to buy more vintage men's clothes. Because they can be smaller.

P – Yeah they can and they're a bit more shaped aren't they?

E – Yeah, so I try and find ways to make them fit. So buying men's on the high street, it tends to be just the top half just because my waist size doesn't come small enough in men's.

P – So do you actually go out to buy so you think right I'm going to buy men's? Or are you looking for shapes?

E – If I'm going high street I tend to go more towards the women's side of things, I think just because that's what my brain's like telling me to do! But then now that I tend to go shopping with my boyfriend I'll then look with him, so I get to look at both sides. But when I go vintage shopping I'll look at everything, because it's all sort of like mix and match. So to me that doesn't really make much difference whether I'm in the women's section or the men's, if I like it I like it and I'll make it work.

P – Yeah!

E – Somehow!

P – What do you think you go for in men's? Like what is it you like about men's?

E – Erm, it is the shape of things. I think men's wear is done better as well, like the quality seems to be more considered in menswear than women's and it's more functional. Like a lot of women's wear, like I love if a skirt or a dress has pockets in it and that seems really like rare whereas in men's there's always going to be pockets in everything. There's always functionality to it and I think like boxy shapes as well like I've got a lot of jackets like this, just because it's like the work shirt kind of thing. I just think that menswear's a lot more relaxed, but still quite cool. So like even their shirts and stuff, you can wear them quite relaxed but there's still that almost like sophisticated-ness to it I guess.

P – Yeah. So you were saying about pockets, functionality, practicality. Is that sort of quite a big thing?

E – Yeah, a lot, like the skirt I was wearing yesterday, that has pockets. It like adds something extra to it, it just makes it more functional. So like if the weathers like this and I don't want to wear a jacket and I don't want to carry a bag I've still got room for things. Erm, because I think that's why women don't have pockets in their clothing, because there's then the market for bags whereas men don't necessarily have that market. Erm, yeah so pockets and functionality is important.

P – So what is it about pockets in a skirt that make it more appealing? Because I know what you mean! Is it to do with like hands in pockets, like the way you can wear it or is it simply because it's more practical?

E – I think maybe the way you can wear it. It almost feels like it's a more considered garment. I think because I do design, it feels like someone's actually considered who is going to wear it and why they're going to want to wear it. And then how you can wear it as well, rather than someone sitting in a drawing room and going we need a skirt, we need it now. I think there is almost that element of like, not power but you just feel a bit more I don't know like together in that, you've got your shit together kind of thing.

P – Yeah. I just think if you can stand and have your hands in your pockets. Do you feel that's kind of like a masculine thing or a feminine thing to be able to do that?

E – I think it's more masculine, like typically, because like women's pockets tend to be smaller so I dunno. I find it weird having my hands in my pockets sometimes, because it's not a typically comfortable thing to do. Whereas I know like my boyfriend and my Dad or my Grandad it's quite a comfortable gesture for them to just have their hands in their pockets. So it does give you a sense of like masculinity almost and then it being on a skirt, you've got a bit of both.

P – Oh that's the same. So you can see that they really fit you well, so that elastic has clearly worked.

E – So t-shirt's men's. I tend to buy most t-shirts from like, I've got a lot from H&M's like men's basic range just because I find that they go to really small sizes. So if I want something quite fitted I know I can get that or if I want something a bit more baggy I know I can get that. The hoodie again is men's and the jeans are vintage Levis, so I always assume they're unisex because

P – Erm, well the women's ones if they're vintage would be like Mom jeans wouldn't they, they'd be like really shaped, so if they're not then they'll be men's. So why do you buy like, so the sleeves are really long on your hoody aren't they?

E – Yeah I think it's a large, erm comfortability. Erm but, my boyfriend get really annoyed at me because my jumpers I'll pull the sleeves over my hands. That's why I tend to buy my jumpers or hoodies way bigger than I need them to be.

P – Is that to keep your hands warm or?

E – Yeah!

P – Or is it cosier?!

E – Both! I get really cold hands so it's to keep my hands warm and to be cosier.

P – So when you're wearing a really voluminous top, so like that jacket, what's the difference in the way that way that you feel? Not just comfort wise but the way you feel, the wear ability of it. Like the way you feel in yourself when you're wearing something more baggy rather than if you were wearing a women's jacket that was like fitted to your waist.

E – Erm, I'm not sure I think, I don't know! I just like the overall silhouette of a boxier jacket, which might sound strange because like having a smaller waist if it was fifty years ago, it would have been normal for me to wear something really fitted. But I don't know I just really like the play on having a smaller frame and wearing boxier items. It's like wearing work jackets that aren't shapely, but then having trousers like this that cinch me in a bit. I like having a bit of a contrast going on when I wear clothing.

P – Yeah. So are you looking for that when you get dressing in the morning?

E – Yeah, I think the ideal is to have that balance of like typically feminine and masculine. So yesterday I was wearing a floral skirt midi length which is quite feminine, but I was wearing like trainers, a men's t-shirt and a men's vintage over shirt. So I don't like feeling overdressed or girly so I always have to bring it back. I think that's like my parents definitely have an influence on that because like my Mum, she buys mainly men's clothes because my Mum, she's like size 16, so men's clothing fit her a lot better than women's clothing. Especially buying vintage as well, so I've always been influenced by my Mum

wearing, she'll wear like big tulle skirts but put Doc Marten's on and a men's shirt with it. So it's like I think I've grown up with like playing with those typical roles.

P – Yeah because as you say a midi length flowery skirt, that's like super feminine isn't it.

E – Yeah.

P – Like borderline a bit frumpy which is kind of fun! (Laughs)

E – Yeah, yeah I do like I love miniskirts but I think there's something more fun about dressing up in a morning with a midi skirt and thinking how can I make this work for a twenty-two year old female. I think, to me I think fashion should be about like having fun and trying things out which some of the photo's aren't the case, because obviously it was deadlines.

P – You've been busy!

E – Yeah so like jeans and jumpers were like go-to, but yeah I think it should be about having fun and dressing up.

P – So you said with the skirt you didn't want to look too feminine? You needed to put the men's t-shirt on. So why didn't you want to look too feminine?

E – It's comfortability I think, I just don't, I don't feel comfortable in myself going outside with this skirt and then putting like a crop top on, erm having really lovely hair and make-up and high heels or whatever. Like that, that's, someone else could look incredible in that but for me I'd feel really out of character whereas for me to then put a t-shirt on and a jacket I feel it becomes me then. I just come away feeling like I feel happy and comfortable and I want to share it kind of thing.

P – Yeah. So you're very slim but you don't really show off your body shape very often.

E – No.

P – Do you try to cover that up a little bit in a way, sort of?

E – I don't think I'm doing it consciously. Like I don't think I'm trying to be like oh no I need to cover myself up! I think it's just the clothing I have and the way I get dressed in the morning, and I think being comfortable in my body as well is one of the important things. Then as I'm getting older it's learning to be more comfortable in my body and what suits my body. So erm, like jeans and stuff I'll try and get more like flattering ones to fit my waist and hip and stuff. But yeah it's not important to me to show it off, but it's not important to cover it up either it's just whatever feels right in the morning when I get dressed.

P – Hmm yeah ok. Oh that's the same one.

E - Yeah. T-shirt is a vintage men's like Harley Davidson t-shirt and then white Levis and then converse. This one seems really basic, but like I really liked it when I got dressed!

P – Yeah. What was it about it?

E – I don't know. That t-shirt I've had, because I used to work in Cow Vintage in town in the Northern Quarter and this is one of the things that I picked up there. Erm, I used to wear it as like a dress and go out in it, but it's not long enough to be so I'd put like cycling shorts on. Then even though it's only a year or two years since I had it, it's finding new ways to wear it to how it feels comfortable to me now and like the jeans I would never have worn a year ago. And it's just nice like developing a style and mixing things, like new things. But yeah this was, this was the day of my last deadline, so I wanted to wear something that felt really good and even though it's just jeans and a t-shirt, it was, I felt comfortable in it.

P – Yeah, some days it just feels right doesn't it and it's quite sort of a simple outfit as well. Sometimes that's just right I suppose.

E – Yeah, sometimes you just need something quite simple but as long as you feel good in it, it doesn't really matter.

P – Do you go for simplicity?

E – Most of the time. There's weeks when I try really hard to stop wearing jeans and a jumper, or jeans and a t-shirt, but it tends to be what I feel more comfortable in.

P – Yeah

E – But like as summer comes round I do tend to try and go to more, I say adventurous, it's adventurous for me! (Laughs) But like probably not to other people! But yeah, simplicity tends to be the way forward.

P – Do you think that's why you choose men's sometimes?

E – I think so, I think its back to that whole, like I just find menswear a lot cooler than womenswear sometimes. Womenswear I feel like you need to have this, this, this and this, where I think men's is more about what feels right for you and I think just the shapes are a lot cooler than womenswear.

P – So you've got like kind of, you've got stripes and spots on today. Do you do that, do you wear a lot of pattern?

E – Recently yeah. I'm trying to expand more neutrals in my wardrobe and more pattern side of things. So this is an accident, but then I don't mind it. Erm, I have a fair amount of stripes, spots and I do quite like pattern clashing. Like I've got a leopard print belt which I quite like wearing with different patterns as well, because even though it's only subtle it just gives you sort of like an extra element to the outfit.

P – Yeah, so when you're getting dressed do you think about those really subtle things like right down to your socks and everything?

E – Yeah socks are really important to me! Like really important! I don't have any plain coloured socks, they're all patterned. I don't wear black or white they're all like purple stripes or yellow and navy spots and they have to go with the outfit. So it might sound really menial to other people, but socks, socks are really quite important.

P – Me too. (Laughs)

E – My socks I'm expanding, they're things I need to buy more of. Erm,

P – Have you seen the Keith Haring socks?

E – No.

P – I'll show you after.

E – Ok. I haven't got any on today but I always wear rings. So there's always like a small uniform to the things I wear. Like I've always got this necklace on always got rings, always got colourful socks on. And then the rest, they like those elements just stay throughout and then the clothing just works with it either way. Like Niamh finds it weird how many rings I can wear, she's like doesn't it get in the way, but because I've been wearing them for years I don't notice anymore, but for anyone else rings might be a more dressier option, whereas to me it isn't. But then some people wear loads of necklaces and I find that weird, because I couldn't do that so.

P – Do you think those feminine touches like necklaces are kind of like what we were saying about balancing your flowery skirt? So you wear a lot of masculine clothing but then you've got a lot of feminine. You've got rings on

E – Maybe, I don't think I've ever thought about it that way, but it could be like a subconscious thing to it. Because this necklace has got, it's a heart! So it's not exactly manly, but I wear it all the time!

P – Yeah (Laughs)

E – This one was girly, so obviously a women's dress I think that's a women's t-shirt underneath and then men's work shirt over the top and converse. Yeah this one was a lot more girlier than some days.

P – Was it a warm day or something like that?

E – Yeah, it was one, it had got really warm on one of the days, so I panic and wore a dress. Erm, I had to wear a t-shirt underneath it because I don't like the dress on it's own.

P – What's the top like on the dress?

E – It's so, the dress itself is like you know like sheered elastic all along here and it's got a thick strap and then I was wearing a grey long sleeved t-shirt underneath it. Just because without the t-shirt it then feels too feminine, because my whole like this area is out, my arms are out and it just makes it feel more dressy. It just made me feel like I was going to a wedding or something! Whereas me just putting a t-shirt underneath it, it just feels like it's more toned down and then it got cold so I put the jacket on as well.

P – Do you think it's that showing of skin that makes it feel too feminine?

E – Yeah I think that's again why I wear longer skirts, because I prefer my legs my bare legs when I've got a longer skirt on. It's a bit more flowy as well so it looks like shorts. Erm, yeah I think like even though it's a really feminine dress, I'll try to play it down so it's not that out there and so I feel more comfortable in it.

P – So what do you think in clothing is sort of really, really feminine?

E – Erm, oh I don't know. Crop tops I think are really feminine, just because again it tends to show off your middle area which women are typically slimmer in the middle, so I think it's to accentuate that bit. Erm, shorter skirts as well I feel are typically quite feminine, I think again because showing your legs and stuff. And I think like the kind of fabrics used in womenswear, like really soft silks or like summery tops and like chiffons and stuff, I tend to think they're more feminine. So things, not just the garment but the fabric it's made of.

P – Are there any details that you think are particularly feminine?

E – Erm, earrings I think can be quite feminine. Necklaces as well I tend to think women wear more of, men I just associate with wearing just a chain if anything. I think men find socks really important as well, like I know my boyfriend does as well. His socks are really important to him! It could be between a light grey and a dark grey, but I think for men the details are quite important too. Scarves I think are typically women.

P – What about details on clothes? Like sartorial details, like things that might be on the clothes like collars and cuffs. Which ones do you think are most feminine?

E – I think the collar like what you've got on and grandad collars, menswear. Women's I always think tends to have like softer.

P – Like yours?

E – Yeah so it's a bit softer. I think it's almost to make your neck appear more delicate and feminine, whereas I think men's clothing has that harshness to it, because it's like oh a man's wearing it its fine.

P – Do you think that you're a feminine person?

E – Erm, not, oh I don't know not really?! What do you mean by that?

P – Well do you feel. Do you think you're quite a girly kind of person? Do you feel sort of feminine? Or do you feel masculine? Or do you feel somewhere in the middle?

E – Somewhere in the middle I think. I think there's still some feminine elements to the things that I do. I think it'll depend on who I'm around as well. Like if I'm at my Grandparent's house, I tend to act more typically ladylike, whereas if I'm at home or in my own space I'm very happy just being content with whoever I am. So I'd say I'm somewhere in the middle, so I might do some typically feminine things, but some of the things might be typically more associated to more masculine things but I don't really mind which one I am.

P – Yeah, you just are. So do you think the way that you talk about it and you feel like you're a little bit of both? Do you think that is reflected in the way that you dress?

E – Yeah I think again because I'm trying to balance a bit of both. That I am a female and I do associate myself as a female and like, I'm quite comfortable in that. That I'm happy to wear skirts and dresses, but I'm also happy to wear men's items of clothing. I think that because I'm comfortable in myself then I can feel comfortable wearing those things and not feel oh I should be wearing something more girly or I shouldn't be wearing this men's jacket. I don't mind.

P – Just while we're talking about gender and femininity and masculinity, on a one to ten where do you think you would be? Which is your gender identity?

E – Erm, I'd say, I'd say a seven.

P – Yeah. Why? Can you sort of briefly explain why?

E – Erm, maybe a six or a seven. I think, I think when I go into uni and see some of the girls in my class at uni, I would then put myself further on the scale typically. Especially because their ideal is womenswear and they are quite girly in my eyes. Like they'll come in like glittery tops and stuff and I don't know they just appear more feminine to me and if I spoke to them they might not feel that way. But I think viewing other people and how I view those people, I then put myself a bit further up the masculine scale. I think because I study menswear as well and researching and finding more out about menswear and stuff I then get more excited about that. So I think that just paces me up a little bit more?!

P – Do you think that are, kind of a different version of femininity? Than the one that the girls that you said about?

E – Maybe. I think as and over the past few years, as we go into the future, I don't think there is a definite feminine, a definite masculine. I think it's all blurring and people being whoever they want to be whether that is one or the other or a bit of both. So I think because I'm a bit of both I, I don't know.

P – Do you think that you could define feminine and masculine?

E – Not anymore!

P – (Laughs)

E – If was describing, because I did a project on the fifties recently and then I've been watching, well I've finished it now but The Crown on Netflix, which is fifties based. So I think watching that recently has made me aware of the roles women used to play and men used to play. And I think then you could say that feminine is about staying at home, being a wife, looking after the children, dressing really lovely and the men who were sort of like the bread winners would look after everyone and that kind of thing. Whereas I think it's burring a lot more now, I don't think I could typically say you're feminine and you're masculine. Which I think is quite nice.

P – So you were talking about people dressing up, looking nice. Do you ever, if you're going to a wedding or something, do you dress really feminine for that occasions? So like do you think about what your day is and where you're going, to kind of plan what you're wearing?

E – Yeah I think so. I think because a wedding is a typically male and female coming together of love and things like that, you do get this feeling of ok I should dress like a female today. And I do really like that sometimes, like if I was given the opportunity to put on a really lovely dress for the day I would probably take it! Because I don't get to do it that often without feeling uncomfortable, but when you're given an event or an opportunity to, it's almost like you know what I will do it.

P – Like a free pass!

E – Yeah but then graduation coming up, I'm thinking what to wear and at the moment I'd love to go in either a dress or I'm now toying with the idea of a suit. Which I would have never considered before, but I think because high street trends are now opened up to this idea of women in suits, it's like ooh it's a bit more socially acceptable now I might wanna try it. Yeah I would wear a lovely dress to a wedding.

P – Do you think that because of the situation that you were in you'd feel ok in that?

E – Yeah I don't think I'd feel uncomfortable or anything.

P – But like you said it's quite exciting.

E – Yeah it is and like you said it's almost like a free pass that for the day you can channel someone else and be someone else for the day and dress up and look really pretty or you could put on a suit and be someone different for a day. I think there's something really nice about that.

P – Do you, so if you needed to go to a job interview or you know something where you felt you needed to be smart, what would you wear then?

E – Erm I tend, I go for trousers, most of my past interviews I've worn trousers or like a loose culottes so it's like shorts. Culottes are sort of masculine feminine in one, so those. I tend to wear Doc Martens because they're a smarter shoe. Erm and then, erm what else? I've worn either a t-shirt or a shirt and then just a nice over shirt or something to go with it.

P – And what sort of colours?

E – I tend to go for more monochrome when I go to interviews and then it depends who for. For one company I wore like a pink shirt because it felt right for the company, but like my Margaret Howell interview I wore monochrome. So I try to be considerate of who I'm dressing for, like who is going to see me that day. Which I think is the same when I get dressed every morning. Like what am I going to be doing today, like when I'm at uni how long am I going to be there for? Am I going to be sewing all day or am I going to be stood up? So comfortability is really like a big priority for me, but I also want to feel cool as well.

P – So you were talking about fabrics before. What would you consider to be; you were talking about women's fabrics being lighter. So what do you think are men's fabrics, so like more kind of manly kind of fabrics?

E – More like, like a cotton drill that kind of thing so it's a bit more sturdier. So I tend to find men buy items of clothing for longevity, well the men in my life anyway! Will spend a bit more money for it to then last longer, so I then associate more durable fabrics with that and masculinity. So like drills, twills, wools, erm so even like denim I tend to associate with menswear. Erm, but I think that's from researching vintage Levis, Wrangler ads and stuff.

P – So heavier?

E – Yeah.

P – Heavy duty, like heavy weight, physical weight, thicker maybe?

E – Yeah. I think because of doing menswear as well, I have to source my own fabrics to then make the garments, I typically try to source more heavyweight fabrics to put into my garments. So I think that why I still, women in my mind, women tend to have softer fabrics.

P – So is that what you like about men's clothing when you're buying it yourself?

E – Yeah I think so. I think that's why I buy vintage as well because, if it's already lasted for this long already then it'll look after me for a bit longer.

P – Yeah!

E – Erm, yeah so I think when buying menswear. When I go shopping I'm a very tactile person, I have to feel fabric. I have to see what seams there are how it's been put together that kind of thing. So I think that's a really important part for me when I shop and why I tend to go menswear. Erm, jumper is women's and jeans are Levis and then Birkenstocks. Erm, this jumper was an impulse purchase! But I really liked it! I saw a girl in it, so I asked her where it was from, because I assumed it was vintage but it's from ASOS. And I just loved the colours on it because I was trying to be a bit more colourful. So I think I got this towards the end of winter and I was so fed up of wearing navy or grey, all my jumpers are navy and grey. So I was like I'm going to get a green jumper with a tiger on it! Erm, but it's cropped, but all my jeans tends to be a bit more high waisted, so I quite like how it then just sits on my jeans.

P – It just sits right actually doesn't it.



E – Yeah, but like winter I can layer it up, like I'll wear roll necks, t-shirts, jumpers, put all the layers on. Then I think I was just around the house a bit so I've just got my Birkenstocks on. Erm, same. So this jumper is my boyfriend's sweatshirt then I've got a men's t-shirt on underneath, same jeans and shoes. Sweatshirts I tend to buy men's, just because I find women's the elastic at the bottom hugs your hips and I really hate that! So I tend to buy men's and bigger so that it just hangs off and yeah, he didn't want it anymore so I had it. Yeah just comfortable, that's just like a normal look for me. This was the other day, men's t-shirt and it's a women's jacket.

P – Is that from Urban Outfitters?

E – Erm, Monki.

P – Oh right. I'd seen it recently but I was in both of those shops so I was confused.

E – Yeah but I think it's a medium or a large so it fits bigger.

P – Yeah.

E – Levis jeans and then Novestas.

P – So do you like more clothes in Monki than you would in say, Topshop?

E – Yeah I don't, don't tend to shop in Topshop that often.

P – It was just an example of a more kind of mainstream high street shop. But erm, do you like Monki then? Is there something about that that you like?

E – Yeah, I think Monki tends to be, even though it's a bit more trend led which is fine, I find a lot of their garments are more loose fitting than there are fitted garments. Like they're always got oversized dresses, their shirts are always really nice, they've always got really nice jackets. And like their jeans as well, they tend to have more Mom jeans and boyfriend jeans than they do skinny jeans. So I think they're almost more considered. Even though they're trend led they're more considered to who might buy it, so I think they are a bit more fashion conscious and a bit more environmentally conscious.

P – I think they're a different mark as well. I mean I only used Topshop as an example, but I think the Topshop buyer is getting younger and younger.

E – Yeah.

P – And they're not maybe sort of thinking at the same fashion level as the

E – Monki.

P – Monki buyer.

E – Yeah I agree with that. I'm more likely to go into Monki than I am Topshop or Newlook or River Island or something like that.

P – My daughter shops in Topshop and she's twelve.

E – Ok. As if! When I was that age there was like nothing! It would be like Next kids or Newlook kids.

P – Erm, size 4 petite!

E – Oh my god!

P – (Laughs) Erm, so let's just. Have we got anymore pictures? Oh yeah there is. You've got a skirt on!

E – Levis vintage skirt, Monki it's this one again, women's jacket and that's erm, well it's a womenswear brand but they also model on men's.

P – Ok what is it?

E – It's Paloma Wool. Its Barcelona based and you can only buy it online at the moment. But they're really environmentally conscious, things like that. They're a really small like in-house team and it just sort of started as one woman who wanted to make a bit of a difference in the way fashion is done. Like

fast fashion is really quick and now now now! Whereas her idea it to like slow it down a bit and just produce things for, at a higher price point but that will last you longer, like season to season. Erm, which I think's really important. Like when I buy clothes I try and think how can I wear it? Not just for spring/summer, but is there a way I can wear it in the winter as well? Like that red dress I can wear it now, but I could put tights on I could put a jumper on over the top, I could put cardigans and stuff. Erm, and I've got, my Nan made me that bag and some Superga's on as well.

P – Erm, so I think we've discussed a bit about your body shape but anyway, this was your scan. Is this what you expected to see? Because some people are surprised.

E – Yeah I wasn't surprised or unsurprised.

P – Are you happy with your body shape?

E – Yeah. I think I don't have as many issues as some people may age may have. I'm like more comfortable in my body.

P – Do you think erm, do you think you probably have an easier time dressing yourself than other people?

E – Yeah I think because I am a slimmer build and I've got a smaller waist. I've got proportionate hips, bum, like my bra size isn't too big it's not too small, like I don't find it hard shopping. The hardest thing would be jeans, because if I can't fit it over my bum but it would fit my waist. That would be the only thing. But like my boobs never get in the way and that kind of thing, like my arms are fine. I don't really have, it would just be like personal little things to me that might make the difference, but to an outsider I'm quite an easy person to dress.

P – Do you think that the way that you dress with sometimes bigger clothing, do you think that that looks better on your body shape than a bigger shape? Do you think that you would still dress the same way if you were bigger?

E – Erm, I'm not sure actually, because I know like Niamh like we've got some of the same clothing and like she'll make jokes sometimes. Obviously like it looks quite different on me to it does on Niamh, it might hang on me a bit differently to it does on Niamh. So I think if I was bigger than I am I would be considerate as to what, well not 'can' and 'can't' but like how I would wear something. Whereas maybe sometimes I take it for granted that I can wear a baggy t-shirt and it be baggy. I don't think it would stop me trying things.

P – So you said your boobs don't get in the way. So do you think that things like hang better because your boobs are not in the way and like your body's quite small? Do you think that the clothes hang better and that they fit better?

E – Maybe in some ways. Maybe to some people who might see me in a big oversized t-shirt or dress or something might think that it looks better, but then there are times that I will wear like a baggy t-shirt and think I'm too small for this, I need it to be more fitted. So I think, I think it depends on the person who's wearing it and who's viewing it maybe?

P – Do you ever try things on that are more fitted and feel like I'm showing too much off or I feel too tiny and thin and small? (Laughs)

E – Yeah there are! There are times like that like I've tried on like a fitted dress and things like that. There was a stage where I really wanted to be into like bodycon dresses, but I just I don't feel comfortable in it. I think because I've always been small, like I've always had quite a small frame. I get conscious that I've got a small frame and I don't want to, I think don't want to show it off sometimes. I'll wear like a t-shirt and jeans, but I won't wear a fitted dress. Yeah I am a bit conscious that I'm smaller.

P – Do you feel like, erm what feeling is that you think you're trying to avoid by not wearing those small clothes that would show your body off?

E – I almost feel like I don't want to over share!

P – (Laughs)

E – Like here's my body, so I try not to do that. But there are people who do that which is completely fine because that's what they want to do. I think it's more over sharing, that I don't want people to know all my like lumps, bumps, curves and whatever. I'd rather keep that to me.

P – Have I asked you what you think makes an item of clothing masculine.

E – I think so in a way.

P – I've lost my track. Ok we've done that bit. And I asked you about masculinity and femininity, ok great. I get so involved in some of these conversations that I'm just like I don't know what we've talked about now! Ok. So I did a pilot study and I took pictures of garments and I just wanted people to tell me if they thought the garment was made for a male or a female body, just by looking at it on a picture.

E – Ok.

P – So if you could look at the ones that I've got and tell me if you think it's for a male or a female body and then just tell me why you think that.

E – This one looks men's, just from like the shoulder being brought forward and it looks a bit more straight down than a female shirt. Yeah.

P – Yep.

E – I almost feel men's again, just because of the style of pocket on the back and the side adjuster.

P – Mmm, they're great those side adjusters aren't they?!

E – Really nice (Laughs) Erm, see I want to say women's because pink, but I almost feel like. Oh I don't know on that one!

P – Do you think that pink is still a female colour or is that just like a knee jerk reaction to say that?

E – Just a, you know! I think men look better in pink sometimes.

P – Do you think when you dress, because you said that a lot of your clothes are like monochrome? Are you doing that to look more masculine or to not look feminine? Or are you doing that because that's just what you like?

E – I think that's just what I like. Saying that though I think men tend to dress more monochrome and I feel like women tend to dress more colourful. So again I do try and balance that, sometimes I feel the need to buy more colourful clothing because I feel like that's what I should be doing. Then sometimes I feel like I should be wearing more monochrome because that's what men do. So I then meet in the middle and buy what I feel right in.

P – Why would you feel like you should be buying female coloured, you know like bright colours?

E – I don't know I feel because when you look on the high street and you look at trends and what's like currently socially acceptable it tends to be. Like at the moment yellow is really in, but yellow is really not a colour for me, but here I am thinking I really need something yellow! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

E – So I think it's following trends and stuff which and try and avoid to do, but you then see all this colourful clothing that tends to be marketed at women and then the menswear companies that I follow tend to have a more monochrome based colour palate with like navy's and khaki's and stuff. So a lot of the menswear items that I own tends to be more monochrome, whereas the women's stuff I own tends to be more colourful. So I think it's trying to find that balance. I think it's what's available as well. If I'm after something in one colour, I know I can get it from the women's department, or vice versa.

P – So what did you think about this one?

E – I'm going to go men's on that one. Erm, I think, I think I'm going to go with women's on that one, just because it looks baggier at the top, but still quite slim at the ankles.

P – So that one is women's. That one is men's but I did dye it pink and cut it down, just because I had it when I was at uni and it was really long and then I just it down to wear it with flares. I dyed it because I spilt something on it!

E – Oh! Clever!

P – It was white! But, and those both are men's.

E – Oh ok.

P – I love those trousers.

E – They're really nice.

P – So looking at the two models, do you think that one of them looks more feminine than the other particularly?

E – I think people would typically think the one on the right is more feminine. Just because she's got long hair and you can see that it fits on her boobs and then goes in at the waist. But I really like how the trousers are different on the girl on the left.

P – Ok. So do you think there's a thing where some people just, like even though the clothes kind of fit the people really similarly? Do you think that one of the models kind of wears the clothing better or looks better than the other one for any particular reason?

E – I think they both look really good in them. Like I think that she looks, not better, but like the trousers look really good on her. But I like how the t-shirt fits, the vest fits on the woman on the right. Maybe it is the way the body is and the way they carry themselves and like the haircut as well. I think haircut can sort of give another element to the outfit. About who you're trying to embody almost. That because she's got longer blonde hair, you typically associate that with someone who is a bit more feminine. But I think they both look good, both yeah. I think they both look the same. I don't think one looks more feminine than the other in this.

P – Do you think that either looks different or better in the clothing? Is there anything that you can pick out that you kind of think know that looks better?

E – I feel that girl, the woman on the right looks more out of place in the outfit. The woman on the left, I don't know it almost appears that that's something she would wear anyway. Erm, whereas I think the woman on the right with the shirt and the tie doesn't look quite right.

P – Why? What makes you say that?

E – I think it maybe is like the hair and the body shape after looking at the previous one. That now I know, I have an idea of what their body shape is. That I can see the shirt on the left does hang off a bit more and that her hair looks really good with the shirt. Whereas almost the girl on the right, I dunno, I'm not sure.

P – So you say its hanging and it's sort of the way that it fits? Looks better to you?

E – Yeah. That I can see the shirt on the left does hang off a bit more and that her hair looks really good with the shirt.

P – Yeah. I think that's it.



### **Participant profile. Haf.**

Vans. Dr Martens. Offend my eyes.  
Bonmarche. Charity.

***'It's pretty much random'.***

**Baggy. Customisation. Eclectic style. Yeah this is me cheap and cheerful! Patterns. They remind me of like horse racing jackets and stuff like that and the shirts. I don't really do skirts. Welsh history and family. High waisted women's trousers like Nain. Likes smocking. Old fashioned techniques. Gender scale - I feel very neutral...I think I'd be a five. ...no I just don't like the way women's clothing are fitted. I like contrasts, sort of a feminine body in men's clothing. Age 23.**

Haf is a final year student at the art school, where she creates performance work to do with her Welsh family history, she wears women's Victorian clothing styles in the work, which she feels connects her to her Nain. For her daily clothing choices HAF rarely wears womenswear however, finding that 'it's almost as though to look right on a body it needs to be really really fitted otherwise it's going to be like your body's not there properly' (HAF). This fitted aspect does not work for HAF's, baggy and relaxed aesthetic, for example HAF finds that that she cannot wear a fitted shirt open because 'it looks like it should be closed' (HAF), whereas a men's shirt is '...straight down and t-shirt underneath it and it's just like flowing away' (HAF). Haf also stated that she had recently stopped wearing a bra 'to be a little bit freer' and now finds with womenswear that 'it's almost like you've got to wear one to have the dart in the right place'

Haf identifies as a lesbian and says that 'I do to a certain extent fit that certain stereotype of having like short hair, baggy clothes and stuff like that' (HAF) and that this is somewhat purposeful in communication of her identity through 'like the bagginess and the fact that it's sort of like if you wear men's clothing and stuff' The most individual aspect of HAF's style is her use of colour and 'just sort of any crazy bright pattern' which is epitomised in her love of the brand *Offend My Eyes*, which are 'mainly for LGBT sort of, but they cater for all sizes and body shapes and I just really like the colour in them'. Customising is key for HAF in achieving her individual look, as shown in the photograph above about which she explains that she has '...sort of written all Welsh place names that I've been to and stuff on it' (HAF) and that as just a plain blue jacket 'it's not got me on it!'

Haf enjoys playing with her femininity and men's clothing, for example she describes how 'I started wearing boxers and stuff like that and I just like playing with that like a feminine body in boxers! I just find it really hot you know!' (HAF) and that 'it just makes you feel powerful to be able to go and wear men's clothing'

## Haf interview transcription.

P – So these are your pictures that you sent me so if you just want to tell me about those.

H – Ok so the scarf and the jumper I got from a brand called *Offend My Eyes* and they're mainly for LGBT sort of, but they cater for all sizes and body shapes and I just really like the colour in them. Erm and the trousers I got given from a friend and then I splattered bleach all over them and now they are really tatty because the bleach has just worn! (Laughs) And then the shoes were just Vans and now they're really Tatty I like wore them every day at one point! Yeah I guess the trousers are more female but the rest is pretty neutral.

P – Do you still wear the trousers and the *Vans* even though they're tatty?

H – Erm yeah! They're got holes in them like everywhere, but I still wear them.

P – Do you fit in guys trousers? Or not so much?

H – Yeah, I'm between like a thirty and a thirty two, a thirty is just about too small. But yeah when I got to into charity shop that's pretty much where I go to the men's.

P – Ok. So can you tell me more about this brand so it's an LGBT brand is it?

H – Yeah, I know the people that own it and I used to do like festivals with them and stuff. Jack is trans, a trans man and then Nick is a woman, they're together but they still identify as.

P – Yeah ok so is it all kind of these crazy prints and thing like that? Or are there other things that they do?

H – Yeah. Jack is the one that designs and does the wacky colourful designs.

P – Right ok.

H – Right so the waistcoat I did myself, I just knitted it while I was on holiday last year. Without a pattern! So that was cool. And I don't really wear that as much, it really, really warm, but it's because it's so stretchy it just you know yeah! The shirt I got from a friend and there's a little bit of a sad story. I think it was a Grandad or something passed away and she still had these shirts and she gave them to me. I just customised that for one of my uni projects, it's a punky thing and it's got some safety pins in the corner and a Sex Pistols badge.

P – Oh ok.

H – I don't really wear that because, actually I shouldn't have put them on here because it really pulls the hairs on your arms (Laughs).

P – Ok (laughs)

H – Yeah and that's why I don't wear that anymore. The skirt I got from a charity shop, I don't really wear that it's not very me! I don't really do skirts. I've got thermal leggings on, I don't know why they're thermal that would be way too hot. Then my Docs that I've customised. Again, it's pretty neutral.

P – Yeah it could be one of those really cold days, maybe that's why you had your thermals.

H – Could be!

P – Do you like the fact that the shirts have a sort of sentimental kind of value or history?

H – Yeah, I tend to like what I've got on now, these were my Nain's, so yeah I like clothing that's got meaning behind it.

P – Have you got any more clothing that's been handed to you from people?

H – Since my Nain passed away I've got one of her nineteen fifties sort of heavy duty jackets, well coats. Erm, what else have I got? I think that's it.

P – Do you wear that?

H – Yeah, but only for sort of doing performances in when I'm sort of dressed as a nineteenth century lady! That's when I bring that out!

P – Oh yeah ok!

H – Otherwise no, it's a bit too sentimental.

P – Yeah. Oh that's the same one. Ok.

H – So the scarf is a Welsh scarf it has got the Welsh flag on it somewhere, but then I still wear that but then when I was outside a club not long ago this guy came over to me and thought it was a Liverpool scarf! (Laughs)

P – Oh no! (Laughs)

H – I was just like oh! Oh not this is not good! (Laughs) But yeah I still wear that and I just love Wales and that's where I'm from and everything. The shirt I got from a charity shop that I still wear, I'm not sure if it's a women's or a men's?

P – It looks like men's.

H – But it's just got a load of sea creatures all over it and stuff. I just like really colourful stuff, but like men's mainly. When I can find a really colourful thing in the charity shop then that's a thing but if it's just standard I won't really go for it. And the top underneath is a women's, it's just got a load of sort of nineties cartoon characters all over it and stuff. Trousers again I got from a charity shop. I think they're actually sort of proper cadets or something trousers.

P – Oh yeah they're quite shaped aren't they those.

H – Yeah, yeah when I was looking through the charity shop they had like all the other elements to they're outfit! But I only got that I think.

P – Do you find that they're, because I used to wear those kind of trousers quite a lot. Do you find that they're got more of a waist than a normal men's trouser?

H – Erm like in a sort of?

P – Like a higher waist? Or maybe it's just the ones I had.

H – For me no, but maybe it's just a little bit loose so I wear them sort of further down. I do feel like because I've got them down baggier that maybe that's supposed to be more higher. And the shoes I think are DC's and I've had those for years and I still wear them because they're so comfy! (Laughs).

P – (Laughs)

H – It must have been a warm day! (Laughs) Erm, the hat my sister made me and she's like year seven and I think I'm wearing the same scarf there as well. And the jacket, I think it's an American brand, J something designs, JC or something like that. Erm and I think they make racing jackets that sort of thing.

P – Oh Yeah!

H – And I've got some gloves on that, I got them because they remind me of like horse racing jackets and stuff like that and the shirts. Erm, there's the same hoodie, same trousers! (Laughs)

P – Yeah!

H – I think I'm even probably wearing the same shoes! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

H – Yeah so I just recycle the same thing and just wear it differently.

P – So is that a men's jacket do you think?

H – I think so yeah.

P – It's quite padded!

H – Yeah! Ok so the jacket is a Welsh one, erm I got that from a charity shop and I think it's a man's as well. The shirt I customised myself and I think it was just a standard Gildan or Fruit of the Loom shirt. The tartan trousers, I'm not sure if they're actually men's or women's but they are quite, not too tight on me but they are quite fitted. And the shoes I got from a place called Trend in Hanley and I think they were women's size.

P – I can't really see them. What have they got one them?

H – Erm, it's just little swirly patterns that's it! They're a bit like the checked Vans.

P – Oh yeah like slip on Vans?

H – Yeah.

P – So everything mostly, is not very fitted to the body. Is that the way you prefer?

H – Yeah some days I might wear some skinny trousers or something but mainly it's pretty baggy.

P – Yeah. So you say sometimes you wear skinny trousers. Do you always wear a baggy top?

H - Yeah!

P – Like always, always?!

H – Pretty much unless I do feel a little bit like, maybe it's confidence? I don't know I mean I just want to spice things up a bit so I might actually think you know I'll wear something a bit fitted today.

P – Ok so it depends on sort of how you're feeling?

H – Yeah.

P – Sort of what mood you're in?

H – Yeah.

P – So when you're shopping for menswear, so you mentioned a lot of charity shops. Is that where you get most of your stuff? Do you ever buy new things?

H – Not really. I don't really like buying into chain stores and stuff like that so.

P – So do you even look or not really?

H – No.

P – Ok so I suppose in a charity shop, although there is usually a men's and women's section, quite often it's like a mixed thing? Like if you go to the kilo sale it can be quite mixed can't it. So do you like, if there is a men's section do you head for the men's section? Or do you just look for colours? Like how do you shop?

H – Even if, say the women's looks very, very colourful anyway but I don't know because like just sort of predicting what sort of shapes they're gonna have. I don't like to go for them, so I will just go for the men's and if they've got any like colourful shapes and stuff. Then yeah I go for that but in general yeah no I just don't like the way women's clothing are fitted.

P – So what is it you don't like?

H – Well if its shirts, I just don't like the way it comes in at the waist sort of thing. I don't know what it is about it. It's almost as though to look right on a body it needs to be really really fitted otherwise it's going to be like your body's not there properly. It just looks a bit odd sort of thing. I just like the straight down and t-shirt underneath it and it's just like flowing away, but if you have like a woman's shirt just like open a bit it sort of it looks like it should be closed.



P – Yeah I know what you mean. Yeah. Erm, is the shaping anything to do with, like you said you don't like wearing tight things. Do you not want to show the shape of your body so much?

H – Erm, sometimes. I think it is when I'm maybe feeling a bit more girly or I just have a little bit more confidence. I think I just like to spice things up every now and again and I just do that by wearing things I don't usually wear in my wardrobe.

P – Yeah.

H – But usually it's baggy.

P – So are you sort of happy looking at the shape of your body on here? Are you happy with the shape of your body and is this what you expected to see?

H – Yeah.

P – So you don't have any problems with that? You just generally would rather wear baggy shirts?

H – Yeah I just feel more relaxed in baggier things. Yeah when I did that I wasn't sort of disappointed in my body or anything.

P – Do you think you can sort of describe what the difference is between wearing women's clothing, say like if you were to wear a skirt and like a vest top or something? Or compared to the clothing that you wear, sort of more baggy men's clothing?

H – I feel like, erm, do you want me to?

P – Just like why do you not do that? How does it make you feel and what's the difference with the kind of things you normally wear? Or the stuff that you completely avoid.

H – Oh I feel a lot more on show if I wear a skirt, a bit more out of place! Even though I am a woman! I just feel like, people look anyway because you know I look really colourful, but if I was to wear a skirt I'd just feel really uncomfortable while they're looking. I don't really do dresses either or anything girly.

P – Is that because it's all one piece of clothing?

H – Yeah sort of, because I can't like. I don't know maybe it's still the shape again.

P – Because you can get quite a baggy long dress. I think sometimes with a dress, it's one piece of clothing and you layer.

H – Yeah yeah! (Laughs) That's probably it.

P – So have you ever thought about that? Well if you wear dresses it's maybe hard to know.

H – Well I like eighties style dresses but I don't like summery dresses where it's all gathered up here I don't like stuff like that. But I remember as a child, you know I was born in the nineties, but I had like a eighties style dress on that was like buttoned up on the chest and it just like a typical eighties party, little girl dress. I like those sort of things, but a lot of what I see sort of what people wear seems to be quite fitted. They look nice, but I just don't feel comfortable.

P – Not for you. So you were talking about the gathering and you were making a face! (Laughs)

H – (Laughs)

P – What is it about that that you don't like?

H – I just think it looks really horrible! I don't know because I like, erm, have you heard of a technique called smocking I think it is?

P – Yeah.

H – Yeah, I like that sort of stuff but the way that's gathered I just think it looks really cheap! I can't stand it.

P – And it's sort of erm. I suppose on the dress it may be necessary to gather the fabric up. Would you say that something like gathering is kind of like a feminine attribute to a dress or an item of clothing? Or not so much?

H – Possibly, because when I was making sort of nineteenth style dresses, the bottom of it was all gathered but the top bit from what I was looking at was always quite tight.

P – Yeah.

H – Yeah so the bottom was always to be bigger. But I don't mind looking so feminine when I wear stuff like that, I feel really grand and posh.

P – So do you do that for performance? Is that what you were saying?

H – Yeah.

P – Right. I was just making sure that was still running because I couldn't see it! Ok so is that to do with your work for uni?

H - Well that stemmed from my Nain. She used to live in a cottage in the country and I just sort of really connected to sort of country life, but through my family. Like her parents would have worn sort of the Victorian style even though she didn't, she was born in nineteen thirty. Even though I know it wasn't a great era for women, but aesthetically I just love the way it looks. It looks so posh! But erm sort of, I'd had a few dreams about my Nain and a few dreams about being I think I was a gay slave for like knights! (Laughs) And I had a dream that I was a maid and stuff like that. So just interested in past lives and who I could have been so I'm just sort of focusing on the nineteenth century.

P – So you dress up in the sort of very feminine clothing then do you? So do you feel like a different person? How do you feel when you wear that?

H - I feel like I'm still me, but just a different century version of me. But if I wore women's, purely women's, clothes from today I wouldn't feel like me sort of thing. I just feel like there's just a connection there.

P - Yeah, you seem really rooted in all of that.

H – Yeah (Laughs)

P – Do you feel like because it's kind of a performance that it doesn't need to be you so much then?

H – No, no but because it is, I feel like even though I'm on display with being colourful, I feel like when I perform it's more of an effort to perform. After a while of constantly sort of wearing it around uni and stuff, I sort of withdrew from it because it was like I had to perform, sort of thing. Even though I love the clothing, but with what I wear I just feel comfortable in it so I don't see it as like oh! Sort of showing off! But with that I feel like I've got to sort of step out of myself to kind of perform and it was just draining to sort of be someone else.

P – So did you spend a while just wearing that clothing in uni?

H – Yeah, yeah. Every now and again I'd be like I'm going to wear this for a day or so. It was good at the start when it was all new, but when it became like every day it was like oh.

P – Yeah! Is it quite big as well?

H – No it was just erm, it was more or less like a maids, it wasn't that out at the bottom. But yeah, yeah it was just exhausting to be someone else. Even though I'm interested in sort of other people's lives, but to live that constantly and not be me was just like oh, do I have to! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) Ok, so thinking about the clothes that you choose to wear sort of on a day to day basis. It's menswear, but it's not like your standard kind of menswear like I'm wearing so much is it? There's quite a lot of colour, like much more colour than you would usually see a guy wearing probably. Are you looking for shape or are you looking for menswear specifically?

H – Erm , well I avoid the women’s shapes, even though they’re really colourful, but I’ll avoid maybe a lot of the men’s stuff because the pattern on it isn’t me. I mean the shape might be but the pattern’s not colourful enough.

P – So do you think that the clothes that you’re wearing are more of an expression of you then? When you say that it’s not me.

H – Yeah, yeah. Yeah like this jacket now, I’ve sort of written all Welsh place names that I’ve been to and stuff on it, whereas before it was just plain blue and if it was just plain blue I’d get sort of oh, it’s not got me on it! Sort of thing! But if something in the shops that is already yeah that’s me! Then I wouldn’t do anything to it.

P – Ok, so what is it? Is it just patterns colours? Like particular patterns that you like? Or everything, just completely random?

H – It’s pretty much random. If it’s not sort of, like I love what you’re wearing and I have had stuff like that in the past, but as I’ve sort of figured out more what I like it’s just sort of any crazy bright pattern. That when I do look at colourful stuff it’s like oh it’s not the right shade! It’s sort of like, if it’s like a faded version of colourful then it’s not quite what I’d wear. It has to be like the sort of under the sea type shirt that I had.

P - Like really wild. Do you wear Hawaiian shirts?

H– Yeah.

P – Erm, so is the colour more important than the style? Obviously we’ve established that you prefer to wear men’s shapes.

H – Yeah.

P - Is the colour more important than the style of the men’s shape that you’re choosing?

H – Yeah I think so yeah and the size of it as well doesn’t really matter. Even if it is like and extra-large I’ll just wear it anyway, but obviously when it comes to trousers! (Laughs) But yeah, most of the time when I go in charity shops, because I’ve sort of fine-tuned what I like I don’t really see much anymore that I just think Oh that’s great. Very far and few between, but then I don’t like going to vintage shops either because the excitement of finding something isn’t there, because it’s all that! It’s all in one place.

P – So you enjoy all that sort of thing? The shopping experience of finding like that cheap gem!

H – Yeah! (Laughs)

P – Yeah I know what you mean. Do you go to kilo sales and stuff like that?

H – Erm I have done but again I don’t find, that’s not the bargain that I’m sort of used to. I’m used to Colwyn bay and really cheap stuff! And that makes me feel like yeah this is me cheap and cheerful!

P – Do you just dress to fit in with your friends? Or does anybody dress like you?

H – Erm, who I know, no! But I have seen someone around uni who looks really colourful but in a different way, she looks really girly, erm pinkie and sort of pastel colours. But anyone that I know, there’s not anyone really like that.

P – Ok, so other than the shape what kind of characteristics in clothing do you look for? In terms of details and stuff like that.

H – Erm, well I’m a very sort of shirty person, so I definitely like a good collar and I guess I like the long sleeves but I always end up rolling the cuffs up! Because they’re always long! Recently I’ve been trying to look for trousers that do have pockets. Just because I usually have like a bum bag or something to put stuff in if I don’t have trousers on that have got pockets, but it’s just annoying to have that extra heavy weight thing on me. Yeah so they’d have to be quite deep pockets to put your phone in.

P – Like cargo pockets then?

H – Mmm.

P – Do you use them if you've got cargo pockets?

H – Err, yeah yeah but, I don't know. I don't know what else I'd sort of. I feel like guys clothing is more simpler than women's and at one point I would just wear shirts and sort of like tight trousers maybe with it. I wouldn't do like, not often where it was both baggy, because I didn't want to look like too baggy. Erm but yeah, I'm not sure what else. I have got these trousers at the moment that are like turquoise and they are women's for like high waist and they do have pockets. At the front it's not sort of elasticated, but from the side and like round to the back it is and I like stuff like that. I find that really classy. Have you heard of Bonmarche?

P – Yeah.

H – Yeah. I really like that shape, but that might be because as a child I grew up around my Nain a lot and that's what she wore! (Laughs)

P – Yeah!

H – So I find that really classy and most of the time they've got pockets and stuff. So if I was going to go for a women's thing, it would be like a high waist.

P – You like a high waist trouser.

H – Yeah.

P – Do you think. Obviously the clothes that you wear are an expression of you, you want to wear colourful. Do you think they're an expression of your gender identity in any way?

H – Erm, probably yeah. Sometimes erm, say I like identify as like a lesbian so I guess I do to a certain extent fit that certain stereotype or having like short hair, baggy clothes and stuff like that.

P – Have you done that purposefully or is it just kind of naturally how you've evolved? (Laughs)

H – Yeah I think it's how I've evolved! Partly because when I was in school I did have long hair and it was really curly really bushy, but then I got bullied for it being so big so when I started to sort of realise that I was into women, I did just cut it maybe here from down here. Then maybe the year after I'd cut it like really short and I had a bit of a punky hairstyle going on and then I think when I started college I shaved it all off. I've tried to do back and grow it, but it's just so annoying around my face! It does get bushy and I just think maybe that sort of school time has still affected me! Or maybe I just don't like it anymore!

P – Yeah!

H – So yeah sort of circumstances have like lead me to go this way but at the same time it still feels like home, I wouldn't feel the same if I did have long hair.

P – So you said that you cut your hair when you realised you liked women, you cut your hair shorter. I suppose you were quite young. Did you think that's what lesbians do, they have short hair?

H – Well no because there was no one else in my school apart from my brother, he's gay but he's like two years, no three years older than me. Yeah so, there was no one else that was a lesbian in the school, so I didn't really know what one was supposed to look like but I just knew that I just wanted it off. It probably was just because of being taken the mickey out of, but then as I did sort of like maybe use like YouTube or whatever and saw different things I was like oh I really like that, sort of thing. But yeah, when I was sort of maybe at the start of high school, my Mum did get like a computer and stuff like that. So that was probably how I sort of saw different things, but even then I didn't really see what was going on with different styles and stuff.

P – So do you think that as you saw or were being exposed to sort of the lesbian community. Do you think you were influenced by that at all?

H – I think so. I think it was like the bagginess and the fact that it's sort of like if you wear men's clothing and stuff, but the colourfulness of it.

P – That's you.

H – Yeah (Laughs)

P – So are you trying to, I mean you said you're happy with your body. Do you think you've got quite a feminine body?

H – Yeah I think so.

P – Are you happy with that?

H – Yeah yeah.

P – So you're happy to sort of have a feminine body?

H – Yeah I like contrasts, sort of a feminine body in men's clothing.

P – Yeah. Do you think that you're kind of playing with that in a way?

H – Yeah.

P – Do you enjoy that?!

H – Yeah definitely. So in the past few months I've stopped wearing a bra because I just want to be a little bit freer. I don't really class myself as a feminist, I just you know, I just want to get rid of the bra sort of thing. I don't really need it! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

H – A few years ago I was like, I started wearing boxers and stuff like that and I just like playing with that like a feminine body in boxers! I just find it really hot you know. So when I look in the mirror I'm just like yeah!

P – So when you see yourself and you've just got boxers on. Do you think you look cute with you feminine body and your boxers?! You think that looks really good?

H – Yeah!

P – But that's kind of that playing with it isn't it kind of? And like playing with the idea of gender! I think we're lucky that we've got little bit of free reign as women to do that as well.

H – Yeah. Born at the right time.

P – I've noticed you've got like pearls on today!

H – Yeah!

P – They look really cute! But that's kind of what we were saying isn't it about sort of messing with femininity and masculinity and gender. So thinking about femininity and masculinity, but as traits so like what's feminine and what's masculine and not to do with clothing. Do you think you can describe masculinity?

H – Erm what in like a typical sense?

P – Yeah, just what you think about it. It's a difficult question, so just see what happens.

H – So like how a man would usually act or whatever?

P – Yeah!

H – Yeah so it just seems really macho, maybe closed off from like talking about things. Well my Dad is very like Oh why do you want to go and do that! Sort of thing, he doesn't get my ideas and what I do. Yeah, sometimes it's just that they're just not open minded enough to sort of experience new things. Some people can be like stuck in their ways. Women I guess are just, well a lot more open and chat about things I guess, you don't hide things as much. Quite out there in their personality and maybe not as reserved.

P – Obviously you said about your Dad, but do you think that those descriptions apply to people that you know?

H – Yeah I think so yeah. My Uncle is very, well all the men on that side are quite moody! (Laughs) And are very like stuck in their ways, they'll always go out and do the same thing. Whenever you suggest something different and it's like no let's not do that, but then they think about it and they want to go and do that so it's like planting a seed!

P – Yeah, so thinking about clothing. What do you think is masculine in clothing?

H – Erm, well just thinking about what my Dad and my Uncle wear. My Dad would just wear jeans and like sort of hiking boots and just a standard sort of Welsh patriotic shirt (Laughs), but my Uncle goes for like fleecy jackets with maybe like a breathable sports top, with sort of hiking trousers and boots and stuff like that.

P – Do you think there are certain characteristics that make an item of clothing masculine?

H – I guess it's just, would it just be the waist sort of thing?

P – I don't know what do you think?

H – I think it would be and maybe just the cut of the leg because they're generally quite straight down, but if it's a women's it's sort of curved and would be a bit tighter I guess.

P – So what about on shirts? Obviously women can have shirts, so do you think that the collar, the cuffs that kind of think is still masculine?

H – From what I've seen they pretty much look the same the cuffs and collars, maybe just the waist that's cut to shape.

P – So what do you think is feminine? What is feminine in clothing?

H – I guess it's sort of a little bit more, less of it! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

H – Sort of thing! And yeah I don't know what it is but from the work I've been doing recently it seems to be all about the waist.

P – Right ok.

H – And if it's not it's just something that is just like a straight down dress but it's sort of like showy offy in certain parts maybe.

P - What do you think about sort of details on feminine clothing? What are the details on feminine clothing that you maybe think oh no can't wear that?

H - (Laughs) Some women's jackets I don't like, possibly it might be because of the darts in them. And I've worn some where I haven't been wearing a bra and it just makes like the jacket look slightly odd! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

H – It's almost like you've got to wear one to have the dart in the right place.

P – Yeah I know what you mean yeah. Ok, so we were talking about gendered identity and sort of dressing for your gender and how you feel sort of gender wise. I made this scale, so can you tell me where you think you fit gender identity wise on there.

H – I think I feel very neutral. I think I'd be a five. I like to sort of try and get that balance. Then I do go through times when I have really liked dolls and Barbie's and stuff, but I've only ever had like one Ken! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

H – So in a way like possibly mentally I am more sort of girly just for maybe expressing what I like more, but sort of balancing that out.

P – Do you still feel sort of feminine even though you're wearing a lot of men's clothing?

H – Yeah, I feel like I'm definitely in the right body. I definitely feel like a woman, I feel really feminine, but it just makes you feel powerful to be able to go and wear men's clothing.

P – Why does it make you feel powerful?

H – I think it's just because you've got freedom of choice. I've never been sort of restricted by my family, possibly because I wouldn't let them. Like the sort of thing my Dad would say like oh what are you wearing that for, sort of the typical thing that they do, but I'd still go and do it. Now it's just what I wear now they won't really comment on because they've seen it so much, but with a dress it's more of a feminine thing so again it's like what are you wearing that for. You can't win!

P – Yeah, because they're not used to it.

H – Yeah!

P – So erm, you said you feel powerful when you wear men's clothing. So how do you feel alternatively when you were in the dress?

H – I just feel like I was another person. Yeah, like I was a complete different person with a different personality and stuff. And I feel like I would maybe just erm, I'm not sure whether it would be that I'd be more sort of looked at by men and that could be sort of a psychological thing.

P – Does it bother you if you're looked at by men?

H – Erm, to a certain extent yeah. I think it's more sort of.

P – Or looked at by anybody?! Because I think people look at you don't they, if you're showing your body off a bit more.

H – Possibly, but I don't like the sort of, you know like the typical attitudes of like ooh, I don't like that. That could be why I do wear baggier clothing. If I am like a little bit, like wearing a fitted top or something like that, it has to be where I'm like I can deal with that today I'm ok with people looking. Normally it's just like I'm just going to chill, I'm usually fully clothed, but because of the colours people still look so sometimes I do need to brace myself to be able to deal with people kind of constantly looking.

P – But when you're covered you seem to be happy with that?

H – Yeah.

P – So do you ever show skin? You know like arms out thing like that?

H – Recently yeah. I don't think it's just because it's summer though, I think maybe I'm just a bit more confident! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs) Do you think that showing of skin is anything to do with gendered clothing?

H – Erm yeah, I guess men can wear whatever they want without being sort of ridiculed for like their shape or like showing, not showing or like showing a lot of skin! But not being sort of ridiculed for it. But we've got all these extra parts! (Laughs)

P – Yeah because guys can walk around with their shirt off and big fat belly out and nobody cares!

H – Yeah!

P – I'm going to move on because time is ticking away. I've got some pictures from a pilot that I did and I wanted people to look at the clothing and tell me whether you think it's made for a male or a female body. When it's not on the body to start with. So we'll go through them but can you tell me if you think that's made for a male or a female?

H – Well looking at it straight away it looks like it would be for a males, but I'm not sure it looks like it comes in a bit but I'm not sure if that is because it's on a hanger.

P – What makes you think it's male?

H – Probably because the tie's on it maybe! (Laughs) And because it's a bigger size than a really fitted thing, it appears to be a man's but it could be a women's!

P – What makes it hard to tell?

H – Probably because of like what you were saying, asking before about the characteristics. Like it's still got that and the curves and it's still got the buttons like it would be on man's or a woman's, but then it's not as obvious with like it could be a little bit tapered in for a woman.

P – Do you think if there was somebody in it, it would be easier to tell?

H – Erm, that would probably depend on if it fit them perfectly. I'm going to say, I almost said a man's, but then the back pocket. I just see that a lot on women's, but I guess it's on men's as well. I wanna say women's just because it's pink! Just the typical stereotype!

P – Do you actually think that, or is that just what you thought because of what you know about pink? Do you know what I mean? Was that just a kneejerk reaction?

H – I think! I think it was! It was like oh it's a women's, but in my mind it's just like that anyone could wear it. It's got a picture of a car on it which stereotypically, oh like a man would want a picture of a car. Erm but just the way I think about things it's like ah, it doesn't matter it could be either.

P – Yeah ok.

H – I find it hard to tell, because like it's got all the characteristics of what would be on like any gendered clothing.

P – Yeah.

H – Erm, although I can't remember which way it is now. I think it would be a man's maybe just because of the way the zip is. I can't remember which way it is now.

P - (Laughs)

H – Yeah I think that is the way the zip goes, I'm not sure.

P – Ok. They're women's actually.

H – Are they? (Laughs)

P – Ok, so on these ones it's like two people in the same clothing. Which one do you think looks more masculine or more feminine? So which one looks more feminine let's say?

H – I would say there's not much difference apart from obviously her hair, but she has more of like a high waist. Not a waist! Erm.

P – Yeah waist! (Laughs)

H – Than the other girl. So I'd say that was more feminine.

P – And so it's because of? Can you say why a little bit more clearly?

H – Just because of the way the body shape is. I guess the like big boobs or small boobs can affect how it's going to hang?

P – Yeah.

H – So yeah again, if they have got a little bit bigger boobs then it's going to maybe hang a bit, because it looks like it's pulling there. So that's going to have a point higher to it. So yeah body shape does determine, yeah.



P – Body shape, ok. Which one looks more feminine on there?

H – Erm, I wanna say that one, but that might, it like, is that? Is that person taller?

P – No we're about the same height. That's me.

H – Is it!! Oh! You look so different!

P – So what makes you say that one on this one then?

H – It just, it looks like it fits better than this one. This one looks like it's messier. I don't whether it's because it's the way it's hanging, but this looks a bit more smoother as though it fits you better.

P – So do you think there's anything to do with the way that it kind of fits on me that makes you sort of choose that one? What is it about that that makes you choose it?

H – It could be, I'm not sure if you've got like broader shoulders? And her shoulders don't look as broad to be able to carry the sort of top to hang properly, it looks too baggy on her.

P – Do you think there's a difference in the way the clothing is embodied by the different people? Even though they're in the same stance and exactly the same clothing?

H – What do you mean?

P – Sort of in a way where someone can wear clothing and it looks good on them. Things like what you're wearing if I wore it, it probably wouldn't look right on me at all.

H - (Laughs)

P – So like do you see what I mean?

H – Yeah

P – Can you see a difference there? Even though there's not much body language going on.

H – I can definitely see a difference, because as well as the shoulders and sort of where it finishes, that's a little bit higher. And the creases in the trousers, there's not as many in yours. Is that just because they're tight?

P – I'm not sure.

H – It looks like there's some creases. Is this person shorter?

P – No. I think it's kind of, what I'm getting at is you know like when it's somebody's style?

H – Ah.

P – Do you think there's a difference in the way that you wear it? And can you see any of that in the pictures with the models? Or can you not see that?

H – I think I can see it just through confidence. Stereotypically, she doesn't look like she'd wear something like that usually and she does just look a little bit out of place. But then if that was her thing and like she did have long hair, but she had the confidence then she'd be able to sort of pull it off. Yeah.

P – So do you see that in this one?

H – Erm, yeah I still don't think that that would be something that she would usually wear. I don't know, it just doesn't look like her sort of thing.

P – Right ok. It's interesting because the photos were deliberately in the same stance, you know just to try and make them the same. Do you think that that is a thing? You know where like people have a style and they can carry it off or not carry it off? You know, depending on if it's their thing?

H – I think so yeah. I think a lot of it is confidence. My Mum wants to start wearing like a certain type of clothing so I'm just like well you know try and get the confidence and if you feel confident people will be

like wow! But if you're wearing it and just like the body language isn't like a hundred percent about it then it's going to affect the outfit as well.

P – So you think it's the confidence like to be wearing like yeah I look good, this is good, I'm happy, sort of thing?

H – Yeah definitely.

P – Ok. That's it we're done!

H – Yey!



#### **Participant profile. KEEVA.**

H&M, Topman, Vans, Vintage kilo sale, charity shops, ASOS.

***'I like the idea of like just messing with gender and like gender fluidity and stuff. I love drag queens and all that kind of stuff so yeah, I like androgyny I think. I don't think clothes should necessarily be gendered'***

**Solid colours. Charity shops. Thrift shops. No frills. Vintage kilo sales. Cheap. I thought it was super gay or something! Balance. Gender scale – feminine side of the middle. I love stripes! Dungarees. Layering. Dog tooth. Checkered. I have the body of a twelve year old boy! It makes me feel like good! Powerful I think!**

**(Femininity). Age 20.**

KEEVA generally wears menswear and explains that 'I identify as a woman but I feel more comfortable in men's, like more masculine clothing and look' (KEEVA). KEEVA bought her first menswear shirt at 15 (the shirt in the image above), to better suit her gendered identity and as a means of fitting 'into a category' (KEEVA) as a gay woman. She describes her menswear style as 'you know like Indie boys? (Laughs)' (KEEVA). KEEVA's finds that 'I don't really think about my body when I'm buying clothing' (KEEVA), to the extent that because her body is slim she looks for '...pattern, colours and patterns I think more than shape and size' (KEEVA). The clothing can sometimes be oversized, but usually fits her body in a loose way and can occasionally be tight fitting. 'I don't know sometimes I'll wear baggy stuff because I don't feel comfortable. I think it just depends on the day...' (KEEVA). If KEEVA wears tight clothing she will offset it with a baggy item to create balance. Large jackets are favoured because 'I feel claustrophobic if I wear a jacket that fits me! (Laughs) Like it makes me feel like I'm like trapped inside it! (Laughs)' (KEEVA).

KEEVA likes to play with gender by offsetting her femininity with male clothing and finds that 'I just messing with gender and like gender fluidity and stuff' (KEEVA). For example KEEVA will 'go out in like a man's shirt and like smart menswear' (KEEVA), yet sometimes '...a strappy dress with like a t-shirt under it...' (KEEVA). Makeup is also identified by KEEVA as a tool for playing with gender, such that 'I'll wear men's clothing and then make my face look really girly in my nice make-up' (KEEVA) 'or like I'll wear men's clothing with not very much make-up and look more masculine. I'll wear women's clothing, with not much make-up' (KEEVA).

## Keeva interview transcription.

P – Ok, so if you want to. These are all your pictures, so if you just want to flick through and talk through saying, what's menswear and what's womenswear, what you were doing and how you feel in the clothing that kind of thing.

K – Yeah. So I think this outfit, all of its menswear. Trousers are from H&M, jackets from Topman the hoodie is just like a sports hoodie so that might be unisex and then men's Vans shoes on. That's just for like a normal day in the studio.

P – Yeah. So what do you need for that? Do you need to feel comfortable?

K – Yeah and just I dunno I like to look decent! So it's more like a normal daily outfit.

P – Yeah and so it's just like a comfort thing it's also like your style or something?

K – Yeah, yeah I'd say that's just my style for like every day.

P – Ok.

K – Same. I think most of the pictures I sent you were like, most of them were just like I was doing the same stuff, just going into the studio or whatever.

P – Yeah ok. So like tell me about erm, maybe the trousers because you said they were massive! So like talk about how you feel about that and why you want to wear them because they're big?

K – Erm, they're from like the vintage kilo sale, so they were like three quid! And I wanted some checkered trousers and they were the only decent ones and I was like they're actually massive, so I had to sort of settle for them I guess! But I like, I dunno sometimes I feel uncomfortable in tight clothing so I like to wear oversized stuff and I don't know why. Like I can't tell you why! Yeah, sometimes I like wearing oversized stuff just because it's comfy and I dunno I feel like you can make it look good and they were cheap! (Laughs)

P – Yeah. I love the kilo sale.

K – Yeah same. And the t-shirt was free from ASOS as well! I think like in September they were doing this thing where you could just get a free t-shirt. You could like design one yourself, or pick on that had already been designed by someone else so I just got one of the ones that had already been designed. So it was a very cheap outfit! (Laughs)

P – Do you go for that as well? Do you shop thrift because it's cheap or because you can get different stuff?

K – A bit of both. Like I shop in, a lot of my clothes are from charity shops or like yeah like thrift shops and vintage kilo sales. I think it definitely helps that it's cheap, like that's one of the main things, but also like I like vintage clothing. So it's cool.

P – It's a bit different as well isn't it.

K – Yeah, yeah. Erm so, they're my girlfriends trousers! (Laughs) She let me borrow them for a few days!

P – Are they men's?

K – Yeah, they're Topman, so. I don't really know what to say! And this is my shirt.

P – Is that what you've got on today?

K – That I've got on right now yeah. I bought this shirt when I was in like year ten, so that was like what are you in year ten? Fifteen?! So like five years ago. When I first bought it I was too scared to wear it because I thought if I wore it everyone would know I was gay.

P – Oh right!

K – So weird, but now obviously I don't care and I just wear it all the time, so erm yeah.

P – So did you buy it for that reason? Did you buy it because you thought it would let people know that you were gay?

K – Kind of like, I think when I first realised I was gay, like you know when you're just like trying to find yourself and sort of fit into a category and whatever and you obviously change how you dress. I think that's one of the reasons I like wearing men's clothes because it just, like through that period that's what I would do, but erm yeah. For some reason I was scared to wear this shirt in particular! (Laughs) I dunno I thought it was super gay or something! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) I suppose at fifteen though, people have less got like a style so you would have stood out probably.

K – Yeah that's the thing.

P – Whereas now you don't.

K – Yeah exactly. Everyone at school all dressed the same and it would have been noticed if I wore more men's stuff I guess then.

P – So you said that you don't like things that are tight. Is that anything to do with like showing your body or showing your shape or anything like that?

K - (Laughs) Probably! Yeah.

P – So if you do show your shape how does that feel?

K – I dunno, because I don't know sometimes I'll wear baggy stuff because I don't feel comfortable. I think it just depends on the day and how confident I'm feeling because sometimes like I'll be fine wearing like a tight like turtle neck like cropped top or whatever like. You know, it just depends on the day how I'm feeling and then sometimes I'll be like oh no I don't want to wear that I just want to wear like cover myself up or be comfortable, but yeah.

P – So would you say you were quite body confident say if you were on a beach and you had to wear a bikini? Or not really?

K – I do wear them, I don't feel very comfortable but like I would wear them. I don't know, it's a weird one.

P – I suppose it's because we don't, we don't get to wear them!

K – Yeah!

P – Because those are not particularly baggy, they're not huge.

K – Yeah

P – They could sort of pass for womenswear I suppose in a way.

K – Yeah. Yeah Nike jumper, I think that's men's but could pass for whatever.

P – Yeah just kind of unisex sportswear.

K – Yeah men's trousers from ASOS and then Doc Martens shoes and that again just for going into the studio and going into uni.

P – So do you always buy men's trousers?

K – I think so, I'm trying to think if I've got any women's trousers. I have one pair of women's trousers from H&M and one pair of women's jeans, I think that's it.

P – Why do you prefer men's?

K – I don't know! (Laughs) I think it's like, I just do! When I go into a shop if I want, I think it's easier to find stuff in the men's section that I like and I think it's more my style. I don't know, it's not like oh I like men's clothing more than women's it's like when I go into a shop, my style is always the stuff that's in the menswear. I find it harder to find stuff in the women's section and I don't like really girly clothes, but like I like. Obviously you can find stuff in womenswear that's not girly, I just think that's harder to find if that makes sense? I'm always, when I'm in the men's section I'm always like I want everything there and then in women's it's like mmm I have to really look for what I want. So maybe it's just easier maybe and then again the thing with when I was younger like I'd wear men's clothing because it made me feel like I would sort of fit into a category like and that's just kind of stuck I guess! I dunno.

P – Yeah, erm do you buy new very often or do you tend to buy vintage and used?

K – I buy more like vintage stuff than I do new.

P – I think sometimes if you buy a lot of vintage, then when you go to the new you think it's really expensive. (Laughs)

K – Yeah! (Laughs) Yeah you get sort of stuck don't you.

P – Yeah!

K – I'll see a top for like eight pounds and I'm like no! That's way too much! These are new, that's second hand these are second hand.

P – Do you have any women's tops then?

K – Yeah I have a few yeah.

P – Oh you said you have the turtle neck and you've got it on in one of the pictures. That stripy one is that women's?

K – Yeah, yeah. I think, I think I have to be in the mood to wear women's clothing. My every day is just wearing men's stuff basically or wearing baggy stuff, but then sometimes I'll if I'm feeling a bit fancy I'll put on like a girls! Do you know what I mean!? (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) Yeah!

K – I'll dress a bit nice like girlier! I dunno! Like a special occasion!

P – Yeah special occasion.

K – So I'm going like, tomorrow is like my final exhibition and I'm going to wear a dress tomorrow, so yeah you know.

P – Put that on the group!

K – Yeah I will! Yeah so the same trousers again. That's my girlfriend's t-shirt and I think that's men's.

P – So you know like the observation that I'm making is that you're wearing that menswear like a man would wear it. Whereas quite often when women wear menswear, they wear it pretty big whereas there it fits you doesn't it?

K – Yeah.

P - But you're not very curvy are you like me. We're straight! So we're quite lucky that we can wear men's trousers and they just hang nice.

K - Yeah, that's true.

P - But that really, I think that could be womenswear or menswear.

K - Yeah.

P - I can't remember what I was going to say. So with the menswear it kind of like skims your body a bit more doesn't it I suppose? Than womenswear. Do you prefer that kind of genderless look?

K - I think so yeah, I'd say so. I like the idea of like just messing with gender and like gender fluidity and stuff. I love drag queens and all that kind of stuff so yeah, I like androgyny I think. I don't think clothes should necessarily be gendered, but I mean obviously there's like, you have to think about shape of your body and stuff like that because men and women do have different shaped bodies but erm yeah I don't think. I hate it when people are like oh you can't buy that because it's men's or like when people tell their kids that they can't buy like a girls top or a boys top or whatever. Yeah I do I think I do like looking quite androgynous I guess.

P - So are their occasions when you'd wear womenswear? So you say when you're feeling fancy, so like what kind of occasion is that?

K - Going out, erm night out mainly.

P - Ok so what kind of things would you wear on a night out?

K - I don't know the thing is it changes though so some nights I like to wear, I'll go out in like a man's shirt and like smart menswear. Then sometimes I'll go out in, I don't have any fancy dresses really, but like a t-shirt dress or like you know like a strappy dress with like a t-shirt under it or like a turtle neck crop top or I'll wear like a tight cropped top with my baggy men's trousers. Just sort of mix it up a bit.

P - You you're quite enjoying the way you can play with stuff. That's what I was going to say! To do with messing with gender really isn't it, like messing with what you can do.

K - Yeah definitely, I think that's it. I like that like, so everyone expects me because my everyday stuff is men's usually, I like it when I do wear something girly everyone's like oh my god! You look so cute! (Laughs) I just love it, it's funny! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) Yeah! But the way that you can kind of like play off your femininity if you choose to

K - Yeah yeah, that's what I like. I like just being about to wake up and think, yeah I'm going to be a fit woman today! (Laughs) Do you know what I mean?

P - (Laughs) Do you think guys can do that so much?

K - Yeah! I think they should if they want to. Erm yeah, I think they could. I think they'd probably get more judged for it though.

P - Why?

K - That toxic masculinity thing, like, I dunno. There's a whole concept that men have to be a certain way. It's the same for women but like I think. I don't know it's really hard to explain.

P - Try. (Laughs)

K - (Laughs) If you're a woman wearing men's clothing, it's like there's like a whole vulnerability with femininity for men do you know what I mean? So if a man decides to appear more feminine, it's like people conceive that as vulnerable and like it's more likely that someone is going to say something to them take the piss out of them whatever. But then it's kind of the opposite, if a woman wears men's clothing there's a whole sort of. I don't know! (Laughs) Do you know what I mean? (Laughs)

P - Do you think it's more acceptable maybe?

K - Yeah I think so.

P – So you said there's like a vulnerability to femininity. Do you feel that? Like if you're too feminine there's a vulnerability?

K – I don't know, no! It makes me feel like good! Powerful I think! I dunno but I think it's just with men like because there's so much toxic masculinity around like. I think for them to do it's like, obviously if it makes, if it what they want to do. It depends on the person I think because it could make them feel great and I guess if that's what they want to do it would make them feel great, but I feel like there's, yeah it just wouldn't be as accepted. Just because of conceptions of masculinity and how men should behave.

P – Do you think that's kind of a stronger sort of vibe than it is for women?

K – No.

P – Do you think we've got more flexibility?

K – I don't know! (Laughs) I can't explain!

P – It's ok (Laughs) So when erm. Oh have we got some more?

K – I don't know.

P – Oh yeah go on then.

K – It's just the same again really. See that was when, I was on a night out and it was a woman's top with a t-shirt over it and I've done my make-up all nice!

P – Yeah because you do look more sort of girly on there, your hair's all done and stuff.

K – Yeah yeah yeah.

P – I like this one! So that was really cold, was that the really cold time?

K – I think so yeah yeah.

P – So is this all guys stuff?

K – I think so yeah, there's men's jeans, men's shoes, jumper from a charity shop and it could be either but it's quite big and yeah men's shirt from a charity shop as well and a man's hat.

P – So do you do a lot of layering?

K – Yeah. I like to layer, I'm not sure why. Yeah those trousers are Topman. I can't remember where that jumper's from, I think it's.

P – It looks like a nineties or eighties guy's jumper.

K – Yeah I'm sure it was from a charity or vintage shop.

P – It looks like C&A or something!

K - (Laughs) Yeah! It's massive the sleeves are like when they're not rolled up they're like down to here like off my arm!

P – Really because it's not that long is it really!

K – No I know the sleeves are just really long!

P – It is eighties then isn't it because it's like short! (Laughs)

K - (Laughs) Yeah so a shirt.

P – So you button your shirts right up?

K – Hmm.

P – Any reason for that? Or just kind of the way it looks?

K – Yeah I just like how it looks, I dunno. Sometimes I'll wear like a t-shirt with one fully open underneath, but yeah if I'm going to do it up I'll do it all the way.

P – Is that a man's jacket?

K – I think it's women's, I'm not sure. (Laughs) I don't know!

P – It's quite boxy so I suppose it could be either. It's the shape of it isn't it. So when you're buying clothes are you looking for shape? So if you went in and it was like a jumble sale and it was men's and women's mixed up, what do you look for?

K – That's a good question. I'd say my style is quite like, I'd look more for style rather than shape because I wouldn't really look at the cut. I don't know.

P – I suppose if you go to a vintage sales stuff, even if it's not in men's and women's it's in like shirts isn't it.

K – Yeah.

P – So would you look for colours or fabrics?

K – I'd go for pattern, colours and patterns I think more than shape and size. I think that's what I'm first drawn to.

P – The first thing.

K – Yeah Yea. I often buy stuff and just forget to look at the size, I'm like do you know what sometimes I just don't think!

P – You'll fit into most stuff though won't you?

K – That's the thing yeah, I just buy without thinking!

P – So is there anything, so thinking about fabrics, is there anything you wouldn't wear?

K – I don't think I'd ever wear like tight Lycra or like anything like that but. Yeah no I think that's it.

P – So we talked about when you go out and you do a bit more make-up and stuff. Do you think that you style yourself differently when you wear men's clothing? Do you feel like you could wear more make-up and still kind of keep that look that you're after or do you not really think about it that way? Does it work the other way, like when you wear more feminine clothing you put more make-up on? How do you do that?

K – Again I think I just like to mess around with it. I don't think about it too much it's just I like experimentation, I think I just like. Yeah sometimes I'll wear men's clothing and then make my face look really girly in my nice make-up or like I'll wear men's clothing with not very much make-up and look more masculine. I'll wear women's clothing, with not much make-up. I used to when I was younger I used to like, I'd have like men's and women's perfumes and I used to try and compensate! So if I was wearing women's clothing I'd wear men's perfume and if I was wearing men's clothing I'd wear women's perfume! (Laughs) It's all these stupid little things, but I just I don't know why I did that!

P – But it's like creating that balance and the way you feel comfortable.

K – I think I feel comfortable in the middle sort of, because I like being able to dress girly sometimes but then sometimes, it's not really me but I do like to like play on it and just experiment with it sometimes like if I feel like it that day.

P – Because you can.

K – Exactly and I feel like yeah I just like being a bit in the middle I think, because I just don't think it matters. Like my personal view on gender and clothing is that it shouldn't matter so. Do you know what I mean?

P – Yeah I do. No you're right yeah. I think women are luckier in that way, we get a bit more leeway.



K – Yeah.

P – Can you tell me what you think makes clothing masculine? What is it for you that makes clothing masculine?

K - (Laughs)

P – Some of these questions are a bit tricky but it's fine!

K – Yeah I'm so bad at this! Just the shape, yeah they're usually looser. Patterns and colours as well though, I mean not so much recently I think with colours, because pink became like a big thing for men like a few years ago didn't it. I can remember there was a whole period of time where everyone had a pink t-shirt! A few years ago, but yeah patterns, colours, shape.

P – So like patterns and colours, you like to wear patterns and colours but not in a sort of frilly way?

K – Yeah, I don't like flowers! Yeah!

P – There are guys shirts with flowers on would you go for that?

K – No.

P – No.

K – No I wouldn't.

P - So like more like these kind of boxy patterns?

K – Yeah stripes! I love stripes! Wear a lot of stripes. Yeah, but I think that's more like my style than gender because I'd wear stripes on men's and women's I'd wear dog tooth and checkered stuff on men's and women's. Yeah I do go for, yeah I think checkered and stripes.

P – Quite classic then.

K – Yeah.

P – So that's what you look for when you go for men's, the fit and the patterns?

K – Yeah.

P – So what are you avoiding in women's?

K – Frills, flowery, floaty, erm I don't like white very much either and like I don't really like pale pastel stuff as much. I'll wear it sometimes but not as much I prefer like quite solid colours.

P – Serious stuff!

K - (Laughs)

P – Serious colours! (Laughs) So darker, a lot of you stuff's dark, but I suppose it was cold, winter. I don't know if that makes much difference to you at all? But it is all quite dark.

K – I've got some pictures on my phone of some summery outfits if you want to?

P – Yeah! I don't think season makes any difference to my colours.

K – No not really. I'm just trying to find some pictures of sunny days. Ok, ignore the fact that I'm walking on a tightrope!

P – I try!

K – That was a men's t-shirt from H&M and those trousers I think I got that like on holiday just from one of those little stalls so they could be either, like I think they're women's. So yeah just baggy and loose and then, what else oh my dungarees. I love dungarees.

P – I love mine! I can so rarely wear them though because they're so long, they just soak up the rain.

K – I cut mine. I've got ones that are like shorts like these you can't really see them very well.

P – Oh yeah I see them.

K – They're the short ones. Then I've got really long ones that I cut recently, so they were like really really long and they were like quite heavy and they would have been too hot I think to wear them, so I cut them to like shin height.

P – Yeah I've got some but I roll them up. So you like dungarees as well, so what about that?

K – They're pretty much unisex aren't they?

P – Yeah.

K – Everyone's got dungarees, comfy, quite, I'd say my style's quite Indie like, you know what I mean so dungarees kind of fit that! (Laughs)

P – I think we might have covered this a little bit. So what is it about the way the clothing item fits that makes you like it? So this might not apply to everything. So if you try something on, how do you know if it fits?

K – Just if I feel comfy. I don't wear clothes that that should fit me that often that are actually my size. I don't really know what size I am. I don't know why I like baggy clothing I like how they look and obviously they're more comfy, like with jackets as well. I have to get big jackets, like I feel claustrophobic if I wear a jacket that fits me! (Laughs) Like it makes me feel like I'm like trapped inside it! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

K – So yeah I like, with jackets I like them to be baggy so I feel comfy. Same with t-shirts I don't like tight t-shirts, but I can wear like tight trousers and if I'm wearing a crop top like that's fine.

P – So you would do that. Would you wear like a tight crop top? Like the polo neck, turtle neck as that you're talking about with tight jeans sometimes?

K – I don't think I'd wear tight jeans and a tight top at the same time. I think it would be like one or the other.

P – That's kind of that thing I was talking about, about creating a balance between too much tight.

K – Yeah.

P – And like just sort of enough so you feel a bit fancy (Laughs)

K – Yeah. (Laughs) That's the thing I think I'm just pretty much in the middle.

P – Yeah.

K – And sometimes I'll dart a bit one way or the other way, I don't know!

P - So let me just get your scan. There you are. How did you feel about your scan when you had it done? You seem fairly indifferent about your body.

K – Yeah.

P – Is it what you expected to see?

K – Yeah. My back's a bit wonky! Didn't realise it was quite that wonky! (Laughs)

P – Oh Yeah!

K – I'm not really body confident, but I'm not like ashamed of it like I'm not really shy about it. I think I'm just, I don't really care that much. I kind of have the body of a twelve year old boy, but that's fine, I mean! (Laughs)

P – But you're quite lucky sort of in that way.

K – Yeah.

P – You don't have these bits to deal with so it's quite good.

K – Yeah I feel like I can get away with wearing most things, I don't really think about my body when I'm buying clothing like what would suit my body type or whatever. I just sort of buy it, I think I can get away with a lot of stuff.

P – Yeah. So my next question was is your clothing choice influenced by your body? But you just, not really?

K – Not really no! (Laughs)

P – As well because you're not really trying to fit clothing are you?

K – Yeah. I'm thinking more about just style and yeah. I think about what things I already have that I can wear them with. So if I see something I'll be like oh I can wear that with. I think I'm quite an impulsive buyer, like I don't think too much and buy stuff! (Laughs) I have so many clothes!

P – You can do that when you're buying the cheap stuff though can't you.

K - (Laughs) Yeah exactly.

P – As well I think the look with vintage is a bit more eclectic and mixed so you can just lob it all together and it's fine.

K – Yeah yeah exactly.

P – Do you think you can make your body look different with different clothing? Have you thought about that?

K – Yeah erm, yeah sometimes I'll put something tight on and I'll be like oh I do have boobs, like! (Laughs) Do you know what I mean? Yeah! It's quite interesting. Yeah I don't really feel like I have much of a figure but if I put something tight on sometimes it comes out a bit more I guess.

P – You do though, it's just.

K – I think I just cover it up so much that I don't realise.

P – You don't really think about it?

K – Yeah.

P – Because your body's quite small and you don't have much boobs, so it doesn't interfere with anything that you're wearing.

K – Yeah yeah.

P – Do you see that in any of your friends that it's different for them?

K – Yeah definitely, everyone is always like oh I'm so jealous I wish I had no boobs and I'm like! Because yeah, they say they can't wear certain things because they're boobs are big or whatever. But yeah I don't really have to think about it that, much so it's quite useful really!

P – Lucky! Lucky for you! Ok so these questions are about masculinity and femininity, they're really difficult to answer I think. They're more to do with, not to do with clothing, but to do with people. So do you think you can describe masculinity?

K – I can describe it in sort of, society's stereotype of masculinity!

P – Ok well do that then and then tell me what you think.

K – Erm just, I don't know if I can! (Laughs)

P – Go on you can say it! (Laughs)

K – Yeah like strong, powerful, serious erm (Laughs)

P – So do you think that masculinity and femininity kind of exist?

K – They exist but they're just like constructs of society. That everyone, well not everyone, but a lot of people think we have to stick to. I think a lot of people think that masculinity and femininity are innate and you're born with them, whereas like I just think it's a complete social construct like it's not really real. I don't think we should have to stick to them! (Laughs)

P – No. It's very different from being a male and being a female, because that's your sex and that's what that is.

K – Yeah.

P – Yeah like you say, social constructs and I'm just wondering about how relevant you think they are in sort of the way we live today?

K – I think they are very relevant in society, but I try to not think about them too much or like stick to them too much I guess. It's just like when you're born, there's nothing in your brain that tells you to behave like a man or behave like a woman. Like you learn that through your life don't you, just from how other men and other women behave so I think. I just yeah! I'm quite passionate about this! I wrote a whole essay about gender performance a few weeks ago. (Laughs)

P – But you've been talking about how you perform gender, how you use it, for fun really! Well femininity anyway and how you use that for fun. But the way that we sort of perform or the way that we express our identity in terms of gender is kind of what I want to find out about, do you know what I mean? So like how you feel comfortable, what kind of clothing you feel comfortable in, is maybe a reflection of how you feel in terms of your gender identity. I've made this funny little chart. So do you think you know where you would go on there?

K – Oh yeah, I identify as a woman but I feel more comfortable in men's, like more masculine clothing and look. I dunno it's a weird one.

P – So like sort of erm thinking about because your gender identity in terms of like. Obviously you're a woman, but just kind of thinking about sort of like, some people are just more womanly if you know what I mean, so I do feel like there's somewhere along here for everybody.

K – Yeah it is a spectrum. Yeah I'd say around here somewhere.

P – And do you think that's reflected in the way you dress? Or do you think it's separate?

K – If it was about just clothing I'd say it would be the same position but on the other side, but me and my identity and my gendered identity I'd say around here. (Laughs) It's a weird one.

P – Ok. It isn't it?! So my next question is have you always dressed like this but you kind of answered that when we were talking about school. So when you and you didn't wear it, did you wear it? Or?

K – I wore it sometimes, like I remember, I think I was like going somewhere after school and I was going straight from school so I had to get changed at school and like walk out of school and it was this shirt that I had. I remember just being really self-conscious like I don't know why! Just because I was wearing this shirt I just thought everyone was going to know I was gay and I was really worried about it! (Laughs)

P – Did anyone say anything?

K – No not really like! (Laughs) But I was just really self-conscious about it just because obviously at that time most people were dressing sort of in like typical of what was fashionable at the time. But I don't know it was weird and then I. Like after I came out and like when I went to college and stuff I just decided to not really care.

P – It's different though, when you're at school is different.

K – Yeah exactly, like now I don't really care about what people think of what I wear like, I dunno.

P – As well cause your environment that you're in is different.

K – Yeah exactly. And like everyone sort of finds their identity at that age anyway like as, I don't know so. Everyone started to dress different to how they did and we all went to college and like.

P – So if you just wrote an essay on gender performance, what do you want to say about that?

K – I do fine art so it was about like, you had to read 3 texts and analyse three different texts and analyse three different bits of artwork so it was. The artworks I looked at were Cindy Sherman and she did like some photographic film stills, where she like took photos of like her performing stereotypical like female characters in films in like the fifties and sixties. So it was like the femme fatale and the damsel in distress and erotic female like and that was obviously just an exaggerated performance of the way that women were portrayed in films at the time and sort of making out. So exaggerated though that it was like highlighting the negative side of it if that makes sense. So she was like, there's one where she's like lying on a bed, like in like sexy clothing and stuff, but like her eyes are like and like her facial expression is like dead like blank. And then I did Grayson Perry and his dresses, erm and just talked about, because he, I think he said that erm he started dressing as. Is it Clare? Clare because as a boy he wasn't allowed to like express emotional vulnerability because his Dad was macho and would tell him off for crying and stuff like that so that's very interesting! And then I did another one and it's this artist called Sue Richardson and she made this thing called 'burnt breakfast' where she crocheted a, like full English breakfast. And I was just talking about how like, because she was looking into like how women's artwork has been sort of thrown aside, like it's never really been appreciated as much as it should have and that stuff. In the process of making that artwork she's performing gender because crochet has always been associated with femininity but it's been seen as a craft instead of artwork and obviously her doing that sort of makes it into artwork. Also her making the breakfast is another performance of a stereotypical gender roles, but then again like the fact that you can't eat the breakfast it's like a fuck you to gender roles I guess. It's quite interesting.

P – Yeah it is it's interesting. I think maybe some people just don't question it.

K – Without realising yeah.

P – They just do what they think is expected and wear what they think is expected.

K – Yeah exactly, one of the texts I looked at as well was you know Roland Barthes?

P – Yeah.

K – His toys essay, just about how toys teach us gender roles. (Laughs)

P – Yeah it's probably a different story!

K – I went on a bit of a rant!

P – Ok, so I did a pilot study using some clothing. So if you could just look at these and tell me, so there's four images of clothing off the body. Can you tell me if you think they were made for a male or a female body?

K – Male.

P – Why is that?

K – It's very straight. Even though the colours are more feminine. I don't know the fit of it looks male I think.

P – Would you go for that?

K – It's quite funky to be fair I think I would! I wouldn't wear the tie, but I'd like the shirt. (Laughs) Male again I'm just going to say.

P – What is it about them?

K – Again just cause it's quite straight and they look quite big I don't know and the pocket dunno, women's pockets are often like.

P – Oh this one?

K – Both. I dunno.

P – Women's pockets are often?

K – Smaller! You can't fit anything in them! (Laughs) Yeah I dunno. I have no idea. (Laughs) I don't have a clue! I was thinking women's because it looks quite small but then looking at the neckline I feel like that's men's.

P – It is men's.

K – Is it?

P – Yeah. But it's difficult because it's got all these little things that are going on like women's!

K – Women's.

P – Yeah they are but what was it about them?

K – Bottom bit is tighter.

P – Because they're tighter?

K – Yeah Like man jeans wouldn't go in at the bottom a bit.

P – Ok so the next two images are of models in the clothing. Are there either of those that stand out as being more feminine than the other?

K – Well I mean, she's got more stereotypically feminine hair. (Laughs)

P – Yeah. Did you go for that instantly? Even though you know that's not really what you think?

K – Kind of.

P – You know that's the answer, but it's not your answer.

K – It's just what you've been brainwashed to think.

P – So what is it about her that would make you say that?

K – Dunno, just hair I'm looking at mostly.

P – Ok.

K – Because it's just more stereotypically female.

P – Erm, oh that's not it. Either of those look more feminine?

K – No. (Laughs)

P – No I know what you mean. So do you think it's easier to tell which gender the clothing is for now it's on people? Or no difference?

K – With this shirt, just because the shirt's so big. Is that a man's shirt?

P – Yeah.

K – Just because it's so big I think you'd assume it was men's, but with the other one I don't think. Yeah that looks like it could be made for a woman.

P – It is a man's vest but like I cut it off because it was really long and I dyed it pink.

K – Nice!

P – But erm, the trousers are men's.

K – See yeah they look like they could be women's.

P – Yeah. Do you think in either of the photo's erm sort of, do you think there's anything out of the person that's making the clothing look different? So does either person look like they belong more in the clothing? Just because of the person that they are. It's just kind of a general question as well about style and things that suit people and whether you think that people can look good in clothing even if they've got a similar body, just because of the kind of person that they are and who they are.

K – Yeah. I really don't know like I don't think about that at all. Like I never think oh is this going to suit me I just sort of buy stuff because, like as we were saying earlier my body shape, I don't really have to dress to fit it. So I like.

P – Is there not a style where you think, if I put that on I would just look weird?

K – Oh yeah! With frilly like, you know those things with like the frilly sleeves? I don't think that would suit me. (Makes face)

P – That's so funny because Lucy just said the same thing.

K - (Laughs)

P – And she did that (Makes face) (Laughs) But presumably you have friends that could wear that and would wear that?

K – Yeah yeah.

P – Do you think that's because you feel like you can't wear that

K – Yeah I think so.

P - Or because you just look ridiculous in it?!

K – A bit of both. I think, but I think it's mainly just I don't think yeah I could wear it and I think if I did maybe it would look alright.

P – Do you think there is an element though of things suiting different people?

K – Yeah I think so.

P – Not just to do with bodies.

K – Yeah

P – To do with the person.

K – Yeah. I guess so. I mean my style's just quite like, do you know like Indie boys? (Laughs) I just dress like one of them so. I think yeah if I wore something frilly, I just don't think it would suit me, my personality. I'd feel quite weird in it I think.

P – Do you think that comes out in any of the pictures? It's ok if you don't.

K – She looks a bit more uncomfortable in her face, but that's just a facial expression! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

K – Do you know what I mean! (Laughs) Yeah I don't massively think so. I think maybe they could wear most outfits and look fine.

P – I think we're done!

K – Cool!



### **Participant profile. EMILY.**

H&M, Monki, Cos, And Other Stories, H&M menswear, M&S, menswear vintage, Topshop, Dr Martens, Oxfam.

***'I'm trying to think what I want to balance out but I always feel more balanced in clumpy shoes. Like not physically balanced but like my outfit feels more balanced...It's like having one thing to anchor the look in a way'.***

**Black. Navy. Red. Cream. White. One colour. Stripes. Basic socks. Practicality. Comfort. Unisex. Workwear. Creative. High waisted trousers. Clumpy shoes. Gender scale...I suppose generally somewhere in the middle slash maybe a bit more masculine. I don't know if you look great or weird! ...maybe it makes you feel powerful or something (trousers and sexy). ...it makes you question your own assumptions of what gendered clothes mean!**

**(Laughs). Age 31.**

EMILY is a graphic design lecturer at the art school at MMU, she wears more womenswear than men's, yet womenswear which she feels is masculine or non-gendered. For years she has worn '...high waisted trousers and stripes...' (EMILY), such that now 'I've got so many pairs of black trousers!' (EMILY). EMILY seems to have an art school work uniform which has an almost monochrome palate (navy, black, cream and white). She notes that this was semi-deliberate remembering 'I sort of went really minimal and quite boxy...' (EMILY) and termed this 'stripping back' (EMILY). Emily notices that at work she wears more menswear and 'things that conceal my figure a bit more, but maybe I think I shouldn't be showing my figure as much in the university' (EMILY); she has begun expanding her work wardrobe, adding more 'creativity' (EMILY).

EMILY is aware of what she likes and how to best dress her body. She talks about balancing the look of her body using clothes, for example she says for jumpers that 'I like them to sort of hang over my hips rather than cling to them' (EMILY) and that she will upsize on upper body items because 'I tend to feel it on the arms a bit or on my shoulders' (EMILY).

EMILY is aware that she uses male and female clothing to communicate a version of herself in different situations, stating of one situation that she 'was probably trying to dress quite masculine in a way and it was in a place where I didn't feel very confident. So maybe I was sort of putting on an outfit in a way, like a costume' (EMILY). She notes of the same outfit that later in the day, 'I tucked it in or something and it felt a bit more feminine' (EMILY).

EMILY has a strong eye for quirky items such as the vintage Jaeger suit (see photos), to the extent that she is 'quite interested in the cut of things and things that hang nicely' (EMILY). She shops for these items in vintage and charity shops for economy and because '...you can get something unique there. She is open to trying new things for occasions and going out, however seeks '...dressing for practicality really and comfort' (EMILY) for daywear.



## Emily interview transcription.

P – Ok so these are your photographs. So if you can tell me what's there, whether it's men's or women's, kind of what your day was if you can remember that kind of thing and what you're dressing for.

E – I was going shopping. I was going wedding dress shopping with my sister-in-law actually, she's getting married. I'm wearing, I think that's a unisex or it could be a men's jumper and I think they're women's trousers, but they kind of possibly be more of a masculine cut and men's Doc Martens shoes. I think I was dressing for practicality really and comfort. I often dress quite simply I think. Fairly minimal. Those shoes, I remember buying them because I wanted the female version but they weren't wide enough for my feet so I ended up going for the men's, but they're quite a masculine style really.

P – Was the female version different in some way?

E – Yeah they have like a sort of a different stitching on the top round the boot, but the men's has a more thick stitching around it. But I ended up buying them so.

P – So you said that they're women's trousers but they're a more masculine cut so is that what you're looking for in clothing? Obviously, are you just looking for clothing that you like or do you look for men's or look for women's?

E – It's difficult. I should have thought about this before the interview! I think I do, I generally sort of look in both men's and womenswear when I'm shopping. Yeah I think maybe this outfit, I don't much about fashion really but like the silhouette. I sometimes prefer a more, I suppose I'm more covered up there and you can see my shape that well. I don't know if that's a conscious thing.

P – I'm not sure I mean, we'll see what else you've got, see if it's a theme. You can click though.

E – Yeah I tend to sort of wear things that are looser fitting I think, I don't really wear anything that's that tight on me.

P – Do you upsize things as well?

E – Yeah I do yeah. I think that's probably a comfort thing and it's probably a bit in fashion at the moment to do that anyway. A lot of womenswear that I have is that kind of shape anyway I think.

P – Yeah so are you looking for that less fitted shape then?

E – Yeah, I think so yeah.

P – So is that men's or women's? Is that a workwear jacket?

E – Yeah it's like a men's workwear jacket yeah.

P – Was that vintage then?

E – Yeah. I buy a lot of vintage clothes as well and just I suppose. I mean part of it's probably I've always dressed, I've not changed how I dress that differently from when I was younger. I probably dressed more feminine a bit in my early twenties, I'd wear dresses a lot more. I think when I started wearing more loose fitting trousers, when I was sort of early mid-twenties realised it was something I was into. (Laughs) It is pretty trendy at the moment I guess. A lot of womenswear is sort of going towards, from what I can see, I mean I don't know loads about fashion.

P – Right yeah! Yeah it seems like you're dressing for what is right for you though. You said this is vintage. So do you buy vintage quite a bit?

E – Yeah yeah.

P – Do you like how do you shop at vintage? Is it like kilo sales or shops?

E – I go to a lot of charity shops and just sort of vintage shops that are fairly cheap and things, you can get something unique there. I suppose I'm quite interested in the cut of things and things that hang nicely.

P – Yeah. So you said unique. Is that what you're looking for in vintage more then?

E – I think so or something that's like classic. I don't really know much about brands but I like things that are sort of a classic shape maybe in my head or you can get usually. Actually that's a fair point maybe you can get especially trousers, you tend to get cuts that suit me better than in a lot of the high street shops.

P – Do you buy more men's or more women's when you shop vintage?

E – Probably more women's, although some of the trousers I buy I think are unisex.

P – Right.

E – Because if they're in charity shops especially they don't seem to say.

P – No. So when you shop in the vintage what are you looking for? Is it fabrics? Is it like details?

E – I think it's, I suppose because when you go in there's a mass of stuff, sometimes initially it's the fabric or the colour and then if I pull it out and it's not the right cut that I'm after I'll probably just put it back. Maybe it's, yeah initially it's fabric and material and but then for something to be really interesting in my head an interesting cut or erm yeah I'd probably buy it.

P – What about details? Thinking about details on vintage clothing. Do you look at that?

E – What do you mean?

P – Because sometimes they have different ways of fastening, like fly and you know sometimes they have detailed buttons or they might have like a different collar or something. So do you look for that kind of thing or is it sort of more the shape of the garment?

E – Probably more the shape yeah than the detail yeah. I've not really though because I suppose, yeah probably the shape more than that. I've not thought much about it.

P – So you just kind of look at it like, will that fit?

E – Yeah I think so yeah. I think that's just womenswear that outfit.

P – Yeah like Mum jeans and a polo neck. That's quite fitted though that polo neck?

E – Yeah I suppose so yeah.

P – So what was that day? That looks like a work day.

E – It was erm, I was at a gallery actually I think it was in London.

P – So it wasn't a work day? Do you think that makes a difference?

E – Yeah, I think actually when I work I wear more menswear items. I was thinking about this actually. I think I've changed what I wear a lot since I started lecturing. I think I tend to, I was thinking today I nearly wore a skirt today but then I thought, oh no I'll wear trousers because I'm in the university, I'm lecturing I need to be like! I don't know it's a funny one!

P – Ok, so do you feel there's kind of like a way of dressing in this department sort of?

E – There's definitely a bit of a uniform or something.

P – Yeah.

E – I think when I first started this job. It's funny I got this job when I turned thirty and I chucked out so much of my wardrobe. I think part of it was turning thirty and part of it was starting a completely new job. And I feel like it's only recently that I've started to put more back into it again and be a bit more creative maybe.

P – Yeah to more sort of put your own stamp on it.

E – Yeah I think I went a bit stripped, I mean I still am quite stripped back today, but initially. Definitely I think when I'm on the weekend or if I'm in my own studio or I do office work sometimes I definitely dress a bit more feminine.

P – So like if it's kind of your day off or say you're at the gallery there, you've dressed more feminine.

E – Yeah

P – Because you don't need to feel like you're at work? Or is it different locations and things like that? What do you think it is?

E – I don't know really I've not thought about it till right now! (Laughs) I think it is to do with that actually, I suppose like at the weekend, like I was wearing quite a short dress at the weekend and I never get my legs out at the university. Maybe that's part of it as well like feeling like, not that I don't feel, I don't feel like unattractive or cover up sort of boxy whatever! Maybe that's not the right term?! Things that conceal my figure a bit more, but maybe I think I shouldn't be showing my figure as much in the university. Although I do like wearing the clothes, I like wearing, I don't feel unattractive in menswear or less fitted things but I wonder if part of that's it as well?

P – What about sort of like being about to go about your day and being able to get on with things without having to think about your clothing? Could that be anything to do with it?

E – Probably yeah, I think Yeah. I think if I wear a skirt I have to think about it a lot more, I don't have to but I do think about it. I think about stupid things like moving around in a classroom environment or bending over or something! (Laughs) You don't have to think about that as much in trousers.

P – So what's the difference then at the weekend then with that kind of more feminine kind of clothing?

E – I suppose it's erm, I suppose I do wear more. Sometimes if something's a bit more uncomfortable you're thinking I'm more on show or I'm more doing social things or you're showing a different side of yourself maybe at the weekend. Prepared to be a bit more uncomfortable! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) So do you think people sort of maybe would perceive you differently here if you wore the kind of weekend clothing?

E – Maybe. I think, yeah I've not really thought about that. I mean it's still quite similar really, I'll often wear just, but sometimes I feel a bit more like dressing up at the weekend. Being a bit more creative in what I wear maybe. I wonder if it's partly to do with how I feel as being a lecturer. Like you sort of want, sometimes I want to create sort of a blank slate to kind of feel maybe. Not a blank, I don't think menswear does that necessarily but maybe sometimes the clothes I choose to wear.

P – Plainer you said didn't you before?

E – Yeah, but I still dress quite, I'd wear like, a lot of the outfits I wear here I'd wear at the weekend it just depends really. I think in terms of the season as well, it depends on the season and maybe I get a bit more feminine or typically feminine in the summer.

P – So what do you think is sort of typically feminine for clothing?

E – I suppose obviously like skirts and things, maybe tighter fitting things. I suppose it's funny talking about it now because I think a lot of these things have gone out of the window really. Although they are still present people are dressing a lot more, there's a lot more like mixing and matching and people, men wearing. Like sort of people shopping in menswear and womenswear and not thinking very much about it.

P – So you say sort of those feminine items that you were talking about still exist. Do you think there's a place for them, an occasion sort of thing or do you think it's just kind of like they're part of the mix and match?

E – I think I mix and match quite a lot actually like even. I usually don't, I don't wear all menswear ever I don't think, but maybe like some of the womenswear that I wear has a sort of menswear style Maybe, but I still mix and match a bit. I suppose I'm always thinking about balance maybe, between the two.

P – Do you think that's to do with you as a person sort of like what you feel comfortable in?

E – Yeah probably yeah.

P – Do you notice a difference with the way you dress and the way your friends dress?

E – A lot of my friends dress similar, I'm in an art studio in Sheffield, a lot of people dress quite similarly there in a way. I mean there's variation but I've got, there's one friend and we dress really similar! We swap clothes and things! (Laughs) One of the photos I sent was me and my male friend at my studio.

P – I saw that yeah you had the same stuff on.

E – We kept turning up for a while to the studio dressed the same. (Laughs) So there's quite a few photos of us somewhere dressed similar.

P – Is this him?

E - Yeah. He's even given me some shoes before. (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) That's great! Do you think it's to do with your interests and say your social group?

E - Yeah probably.

P – Do you notice a difference between your social group and people with your interests and other people?

E – Yeah I think so, I was on a hen at the weekend, like a few weekends ago. It was my like, it was a relative and so it wasn't my friendship group at all and suddenly I felt dressed more masculine than everyone there I think.

P – Yeah, so what did you wear?

E – I was wearing trousers, sort of trousers and trainers. It wasn't like a night on the town hen do, it was a bit more low key, but I still felt like I was the least feminine person there in terms of what I was wearing.

P – Was it in Manchester? Do you live in Sheffield?

E – Yeah.

P – So was it in Sheffield?

E – No it was elsewhere, we went to the countryside.

P – Right. Do you notice a difference between the way people dress from Sheffield to Manchester or is it a similar kind of vibe?

E – I'd say similar, but Manchester's a bit more trendy maybe on the whole, probably there's more people more shops. Sheffield's, I suppose I'm in part of the art scene there, but people dress quite similarly there in a way. I mean there obviously variation, but the common vibe!

P – Ok. I'm just flicking back through. So what's this one?

E – I think they're, actually, I think that might be all womenswear actually.

P – Ok, but it's very kind of unisex looking.

E – Yeah I put that on and making a joke I thought I'd dressed as Neil Buchanan that day! (Laughs) I had like white trainers on as well!

P - (Laughs) Yeah! So it's just a sweatshirt and is it jeans?

E – Yeah I had some white trainers on as well. That was a studio day I think. I suppose that was an exhibition so it was quite practical.

P – Yeah, so you've got is it like Mum jeans or something? Is it the top you've got on now?

E – A different one but really similar yeah. (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) Do you do that quite a lot?

E – Yeah I think so!

P – You like stripes, you’ve got a lot of stripes!

E – I wear a lot of I think, high waisted trousers and stripes, but just changing them for years and years and years!

P – Oh have you been doing that for a long time?

E – I mean it’s obviously like a common thing that people do. I seem to have just slowly upgrade or on a quest to find like the perfect pair of high waisted jeans, since my late teens I think.

P – Do you spend on like new things or do you prefer to buy used?

E – Err, it depends really. I think I’ve got a bit less. I backed off from vintage a bit when I turned thirty. I think that was to do with maybe the vintage shops in Sheffield, feeling like they were geared towards a teenager early twenties audience. So yeah.

P – So when you’re buying new do you look for brands or do you just look for the kinds of things you like?

E – I tend to go into similar shops but I’m not, like there’s certain shops I go to but then within them I look for certain things I like.

P – Where do you go?

E – Erm, I suppose And Other Stories and sometimes Cos, H&M, erm Monki.

P – Do you go specifically to any menswear shops?

E – I look at the menswear in H&M sometimes. I suppose menswear I usually buy in vintage shops.

P – Because it’s all in the same place as well?

E – Yeah.

P – Do you feel comfortable looking in the menswear department of a shop if you feel like you want to?

E – Yeah.

P – So why would you go there? What do you think you would be looking for if you went to the men’s that you can’t find in women’s?

E – Probably t-shirts, looser fitting t-shirts, err jackets. Actually I shop a bit in M&S but I get really annoyed with the womenswear especially. I think I wrote some emails to you about the socks and a lot of their basic t-shirts just feel so strange in a way that geared up, the colours and the shapes are so, some sort of model of what feminine is meant to be, but you can’t get that in like there’s loads of other shops you can get that in, but you can’t get basic women’s socks. The men’s socks are such a different.

P -So what are you saying about the women’s socks?! The women’s socks are too fancy are you saying?

E – Yeah they’re all pastel colours and they have some like plain block colours, if you just want a plain sock that’s sort of high ankle. They’re less practical the women’s socks. Or there’s less of a choice for that I think.

P – So do you think, what is it you were saying about the women’s, is it the t-shirts more in M&S?

E – Yeah.

P – So what is it about the shape you don’t like?

E – They all seem to be higher on the hip or like higher up here, I prefer ones that are longer. Some of them seem to be more fitted on the arms and I prefer loose arms and sometimes the necklines, I prefer like a sort of higher neck line.

P – It sounds like you prefer just like a unisex t-shirt really.

E – Yeah

P – So what is it about the unisex t-shirt that you like better?

E – I think it suits my figure maybe. I don't like having tight things on my arms.

P – Are you conscious of your arms?

E – Not really but I think sometimes when I'm wearing tight things, they're kind of slim but they're not, sometimes when I wear tight, like because I'm quite flat like smaller chested. Proportion wise I just think it looks better if I'm in a looser fitting thing.

P – Yeah.

E – I think sometimes I feel like my arm proportion to chest proportion, there's something about that that I don't like if it's really tight.

P – Oh ok. So you don't want to accentuate the fact that you're arms are, like you said you feel like they're sort of bigger?

E – They're kind of sporty I suppose! (Laughs)

P – Sporty arms! (Laughs) So when we did the scan, talking about your figure. Was that what you were expecting to see?

E – I think so yeah. Apart from the slight slant!

P – In your shoulder?!

E – Yeah! I think that's what I expected yeah.

P – Ok. I like this one what's this?

E – That's a red vintage trouser suit from Jaeger, I got on Oxfam online. I was at a wedding.

P – That's awesome! I know it's womenswear and it's not really on topic! So it's womenswear but what drew you to that? You were going to a wedding did you say?

E – Yeah.

P – So like other things you could have worn to a wedding, why would you choose to wear this?

E – I think the first, I did wear that to a wedding before and people commented on it a lot.

P – Good comments?

E – Yeah, people like quite positive about it, but then one of my friends who's very feminine was just like, or like she wears a lot more traditional feminine items. She was like, I don't know if you look great or weird! (Laughs) I mean I think when I wore that, I wore that two years ago, maybe it was a bit more slightly more out there that it probably is now. You see a lot more trousers suits in women's like Topshop and things like that.

P – I think that's probably the best complement you can get!

E – Yeah! (Laughs)

P – I don't know whether you look great or weird. (Laughs)

E – She was like, you've gone so minimal on your jewellery! I was only wearing like earrings or something and she likes more like over the top.

P – So is this sort of typical of the kind of, not this outfit specifically, but the kind of outfit you'd wear if you needed to go to a wedding?

E – Yeah I think so.

P – Would you ever consider going for the dress and conforming? Do you ever consider that?

E – That's funny because I'm trying desperately to find a wedding outfit at the moment. Struggling!

P – So are you looking for a similar thing or are you trying to get a dress?

E – I was looking at dresses actually, because I was thinking of a similar thing but now I've seen a lot of them in the shops it's like I feel like I've worn that already. I did like wearing, I do like wearing, I feel more sexy or something in a trouser suit for some reason, than a dress.

P – Why do you think that is?

E – A lot of it, I don't really know maybe it makes you feel powerful or something. Part of it as well is. It's funny as I'm answering these questions it makes you question your own assumptions of what gendered clothes mean! (Laughs) But also physically, I can dance better in a trouser suit than I can a dress! You can move your legs!

P – So you were talking before about practicality, so it's like a confidence maybe? In what you're wearing. So if you were wearing a dress what's the difference?

E – I think I feel a bit more vulnerable in a dress because, it's so funny thinking answering these questions! Your legs are out, maybe you just feel a bit more like it's hard to access your underneath body in trousers and you're all done up and things! I don't know. Maybe that's part of it.

P – Yeah. Like you said, you said you don't wear, do you wear skirts and dresses occasionally?

E – Yeah I sometimes wear them more in summer. It takes me a lot, I don't think I'm as confident about my legs actually, I don't like my legs as much as. I'm quite happy to cover them up I think.

P – So you said you feel more vulnerable in a dress? So how do you feel for this? You said you feel more?

E – I'd feel more confident and sexy in a trouser suit I think.

P – Confident in yourself.

E – Yeah.

P – So that then makes you feel more sexy?

E – Yeah I think so.

P – I really like that though. I tend to borrow for weddings now.

E – That's a good idea. I might have to ask you for some tips actually as to where I can get a wedding outfit. I just can't think of anything.

P – Ok! I could lend you something! (Laughs) Is that today's outfit?

E – Err no but it's pretty much the same.

P – Ok, so it's the t-shirt you're wearing though isn't it today? It's got the same neck yeah. So is that from womenswear?

E – It is it's from Monki so it's womenswear, but I think they do a lot of unisex type.

P – Boxy shapes. Is Monki a womenswear shop or is it both?

E – Err I think, I don't know if they do menswear. I'm not sure.

P – Do they cater for kind of the things you like then?

E – Yeah definitely yeah, they've got a lot of sort of what looks unisex clothing I think. Or just non gendered clothing I'd say, maybe that's a better way of putting it. So they don't do typically, well they do do typically feminine things but them also. The colours seem, so for example I was comparing it to like Marks and Spencers. I know Marks and Spencers are all pretty, it's a wide range but in terms of their socks! It's a sticking point there! Monki seems to do like a wide range of colours and cuts.

P – Yeah I was wondering whether, do you think Marks and Spencer is aiming at a different market?

E – Yeah probably yeah.

P – I think you can sometimes go in there and find something really cool, that they've accidentally designed! (Laughs)

E – Yeah I really like some of the stuff from the actual, the main section.

P – But I think sort of if you're looking for basics, like you say they're making them for an older lady aren't they, that wants it to just sit here. This is nice I like your boot trouser combination.

E – I think they might be men's trousers actually, I can't remember. Or maybe they're women's! I'm not sure. I've got so many pairs of black trousers!

P – Have you?

E – Yeah.

P – So is the rest of it women's? You've got a really long coat on.

E – The coat could be unisex. I got that front a charity shop and it was a brand I'd never heard of. Is that, is that the coat I'm thinking of? Oh not it's not! It's an M&S coat!

P – So is it womenswear?

E – I assume so yeah. I just got it on Ebay. It's just one of those that says St. Michael. But it's quite, I used to have a coat, in fact I used to have a coat really similar to that from M&S but a recent M&S buy. It was all like, it was long and black but it was nipped in at the waist and it had like a waist tie, whereas that one is more it just goes straight down. It's like a double breasted thing with a really kind of, it's a bit more broad shouldered.

P – Yeah like an overcoat?

E – Yeah.

P – Yeah they're nice aren't they?

E – Yeah.

P – So what is it you like about that kind of style that's more kind of a boxy shape isn't it?

E – Yeah. I'm not sure really. Part of you wonders whether it's just you're following trends or whether it's something inside you. Something deep inside!! (Laughs) That makes you drawn towards these things.

P – Something deep! (Laughs) Do you think it could be trends that makes you want to cover up your body? Or do you think that's more to do with you?

E – I suppose it's a combo because a lot of styles cater towards that look. Like I say oversized look anyway, but then also I always used to dread summer because I didn't want to get my legs out! But I'm trying, I mean I'm embracing it a bit more and I'm just like fuck it I'm hot.

P – (Laughs)

E – I mean I don't mean I'm hot! (Laughs) I'm warm! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

E – The temperature is hot! (Laughs)



P – Yeah so do you think that's sort of a maturity thing? So you get to point where you think well this is me?

E – Yeah maybe. Mum's always been quite negative about her legs, so I wonder if that's rubbed off on me a little bit. And she's quite sporty as well.

P – Are you quite sporty?

E – Yeah.

P – Yeah you'd been to the gym last time I saw you. So you said that trends are kind of boxy, but that's not the only trend there's also like I'm thinking about showing everything, like really short skirts, really bodycon. So you've obviously not gone for that?

E – Yeah I used to wear more bodycon in my early twenties. It was quite American Apparel, everyone I knew had the same bodycon dress then! I remember when I was like, up to the age of about twenty-six I was wearing more crop tops, still trousers and things but I was wearing more crop tops but I've sort of stopped doing that now.

P – Yeah because that would still be a trend so that would be something you could do now.

E – Yeah.

P – Yeah but you choose not to?

E – Yeah I think so.

P – Do you think that's an age thing?

E – I think it's an age thing yeah. I mean not that I'm saying people can't wear crop tops at any age but I think I sort of became conscious of it and thought. I sort of when I, it's probably daft really, but I thought I'm thirty I'm not going to wear crop tops anymore! (Laughs)

P – That's it! (Laughs) I'm sure you could though. You go to the gym and you're slim and stuff so there's no reason why you couldn't with high waisted trousers.

E – Yeah I think the right amount of crop top, it's just finding the right crop top!

P – It's winter look, it must be the cold time?

E – Oh yeah that was in Madrid.

P – Oh right. Is this the same coat?

E – Err, yeah that's the big boxy coat and that's like a second hand jumper.

P – Is looks like a women's jumper?

E – Yeah it is a women's jumper I think.

P – I can tell because of the cuffs and stuff.

E – I think it's because it's got a, it's not got a, like the cuffs are quite.

P – It's not got a cuff yeah. It's got that kind of. Has it got a cuff?

E – No. It's probably the length where it sits on you.

P – Yeah. What I'm pointing out on this is the details. Like on a men's jumper you'd pretty much always get that ribbed cuff. And on the bottom here it's just kind of finished and there's not bottom to it.

E – Yeah.

P – Do you notice those kinds of details?

E – No I don't.

P – You don't. So if you're buying a jumper what are you looking for?

E – I mean maybe subconsciously I notice it, but I like jumpers that sort of sit over my hips and they finish sort of on the leg maybe.

P – I notice that you wear a lot of sort of triangular sort of. You've got a cream jumper which is kind of that shape and then that stripy one is kind of the shape.

E – I think I feel like I'm trying to balance my body out maybe.

P – Why? Do you see any imbalance on here? Apart from the shoulder! (Laughs)

E – (Laughs). I maybe think, not an imbalance but I think oh I've got hips so I don't like things to sit close on the hip. I like things to be loose on my hips.

P – Your tops you mean? You like them coming over?

E – Yeah I like them to sort of hang over my hips rather than cling to them. I don't like it when things cling to me.

P – So you tend to, apart from that polo that jumper, you seem to be wearing baggier tops.

E – Yeah.

P – So is that what you mean by balancing?

E – Yeah. Because I don't like, yeah I think. I used to wear more skinny jeans as well in my early twenties, but I don't wear them anymore. That's something to do with, I think yeah I'm not sure. It is something to do with balance I think. I think I like to feel like I'm. I dunno, it's hard to analyse it.

P – Yeah I can see that I know what you mean because like you said you've got a smaller chest so you're maybe just trying

E – I think I'm smaller here and my waist is smallish and my hips feel bigger so maybe I'm trying to create some sort of illusion of hips! (Laughs)

P – Yeah I know what you mean you sort of, rather than a small top, yeah I know what you're saying. Ok. I think that's the jumper I was talking about. I like this outfit. Are they men's or women's trousers?

E – I think, I'm not sure they're second hand they're from St. Michael, the old M&S. I don't know maybe they are women's actually.

P – They could be either I suppose.

E – I couldn't tell when I got them but I suppose traditionally would the zip be a different way?

P – Probably.

E – Some of the students were into those trousers! (Laughs)

P – Yeah well they're kind of the sort of ones they'd be wearing aren't they. I can't see this one!

E – It's really hard to see!

P – Shall we skip that one I don't even know what you've got on? Ok.

E – That's And Other Stories that shirt. It's womenswear but it's pretty, I mean it looks like. Maybe you can tell because you're fashion but it looks like it could be a men's or ladies.

P – Yeah has it got any darts or anything? You know like?

E – I don't think so.

P – It doesn't look like it would need it. Did you buy like your size or did you?

E – It was in the sale and it was bigger than my size, it was two sizes bigger. I think I would've wanted it that size anyway.

P – Yeah. What I'm thinking is like if it was your size how would it fit? How have they designed it to fit?

E – Yeah.

P – You know, because there tends to be, like have you noticed in womenswear the shoulder tend to be narrower? You've got fairly broad shoulders really.

E – Yeah yeah.

P – Do you have a problem with that with womenswear?

E – I think, maybe sometimes like in jumpers I'll always buy a size up actually. Yeah if I'm buying a shirt I'll always buy a size up, because I don't like fitted shirts anyway but even, yeah like I tend to feel it on the arms a bit or on my shoulders.

P – Yeah because it's tight across there.

E – That jumper I'm a bit funny about because it sits a bit more on the hips.

P – It's quite small and has it got cropped sleeves?

E – I think I was just pulling my sleeves up. I don't like actually, since I bought that I don't like the way it sits on my arms. I thought it would loosen up and it does that thing where it pulls up a bit.

P – Is it under your arm?

E – Yeah like the way it sits on my shoulder, I would prefer things sat off my shoulder.

P – Pop it on Ebay! I like that jacket is that like a mac?

E – Yeah, that could be women's.

P – It looks like it could well be women's.

E – And I'm wearing skirt there.

P – Is it just a black skirt? I can't really see.

E – It's kind of a loose fitting black skirt.

P – Still quite a parred down sort of look though. So if you're wearing a skirt or dressed normally would it still be the same sort of colour scheme you'd go for? You tend to go for black, cream.

E – Yeah black, navy, sometimes I wear red, sometimes.

P – Yeah so if you're wearing a dress or a skirt does it tend to fit in with that or would you go completely crazy and go floral?

E – I don't really wear much pattern, except stripes! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

E – Funny looking for this wedding dress or trying this dress for a wedding I should say! I was trying to, I've been struggling because I just want one colour and I bought a really bright yellow dress which I was quite into. The cut of it's not very good but it just made me think I'm just not even considering patterned dresses or anything. I just want one colour. Yeah I bought a dress at the weekend from a charity shop and it was just a very black shift like mini-ish, short very black minimal.

P – Is that something you would maybe consider wearing for work?

E – Probably not for this job no, it's a bit short I think.

P – Oh is it right.

E – Maybe it's a practical thing, too dressy maybe. I'd wear it to degree show night.

P – Short can be tricky though can't it, you don't want to be shuffling around with your skirt all hooked up! Is that the same shirt?

E – Yeah.

P – And is that the?

E – That's that black double breasted coat.

P – So I imagine that's quite, that's quite a masculine look?

E – That was the first day of a job in an office actually. I was doing some freelance work. It's funny actually that they called me in for like this consultancy design work so I was probably trying to dress quite masculine in a way and it was in a place where I didn't feel very confident. So maybe I was sort of putting on an outfit in a way, like a costume.

P – So did you deliberately, you deliberately chose to go for that more, would you call it business-like kind of look?

E – Yeah, I think so yeah I was quite like very. Usually with a shirt I'd kind of dress it down a bit or make it a bit more casual, but that day I thought I'd just be a bit more business-like.

P – Yeah you've got it buttoned right up. Do you always do that?

E – No I sometimes have it more open.

P – So like serious buttoned up.

E – Yeah serious me, casual me! (Laughs)

P – Yeah. Ok and so did that make you feel more confident going in?

E – Yeah, it's funny because the rest of the day I went to my art studio and I went shopping afterwards and I changed it.

P – Did you.

E – I think I tucked it in or something and it felt a bit more feminine.

P – Oh that's really good.

E – It's funny it's making me, you sort of question the things you assign to gendered clothing.

P – Yeah! I can see the coat a bit better there, it's really nice. And that's you and your friend. See that's more of a feminine look isn't it.

E – Yeah it's more tucked in so you can see my waist more.

P – So that looks quite low is it just like a V-neck t-shirt?

E – It's just like a Topshop vest thing yeah.

P – That's all womenswear is it that one? Do you every, do you wear men's trousers?

E – Sometimes yeah, mainly women's trousers though. Yeah they're men's shoes but the rest of it's womenswear.

P – So your shoes are quite sort of heavy, clumpy. Is that something that you tend to go for?

E – Yeah. I think so. I think it, maybe it's because. I'm trying to think what I want to balance out but I always feel more balanced in clumpy shoes. Like not physically balanced but like my outfit feels more balanced.

P – Yeah maybe if you consider what alternative shoes you could wear. If you were wearing a more feminine shoe do you think it could like completely change the way your outfit looks?

E – Yeah I think so yeah. It's like having one thing to anchor the look in a way. I don't know what that means, if I don't dig deep into it!

P – Well I think if you wore a different shoes with that outfit, say you wore like a ballet pump or something (Laughs)

E - (Laughs)

P – It changes the look of the outfit completely.

E – Yeah, yeah.

P - And it's those little details that you realises make the difference, that makes what you wear so interesting.

E - I like I think erm, it feels like it's erm. I've worn outfits before, I've got these little court shoe things, they're old Clarks they've only got a tiny heel, they're really nice. I buy them and I think oh I really like these and then never end up wearing them, especially with shoes I like to be clunky and heavy.

P - Do you sort of obsess about details like which socks look right?

E – Definitely yeah I spend ages getting dressed even if it's quite a simple outfit.

P – So all those little details sort of really matter to the outfit and how it goes together. Ok that's all of them. Ok so I've been asking this question about masculinity and femininity and it's not to do with clothing, it just to do with masculinity and femininity as traits. So do you think you could describe masculinity?

E – Oh! That's really hard! I'm so don't know what to say because I think it's obviously like a construct and it's changing. The view of what masculinity is or femininity is, is quite fluid and flexible and I'm not really sure any more what that masculinity is! I don't' even know what to describe!

P – Do you think that those terms are still useful in the way that we live today?

E – Erm, I'm really not sure, because it's especially when I was talking about the clothes and thinking what sort of assumptions I give to certain outfits say with the trouser suit. It's funny that I'm obviously playing some sort of, you're playing with gender in a way by wearing that, but so you're obviously adopting some of what you have in your head as a perceived model of masculinity. So I'm playing with that, but then all my assumptions of it are and what society's assumptions of it are but then I still don't know what it means anymore in a way, because it's such a broad term.

P – Do you feel the same about femininity?

E – Probably yeah, because I feel more feminine. I talked to one of my friends actually, I was saying I feel way more feminine in trousers. Like I felt way more feminine wearing a trousers suit than I did wearing a dress for example. I've worn a dress to a wedding a few years ago, it was very thin straps like spaghetti straps, it had a floral pattern on it actually. I felt awful all day, I felt like less feminine.

P – Do you think that's personal to you and the way you feel in clothing?

E – Probably yeah.

P - Obviously you have that friend who would happily wear that dress I imagine.

E – Yeah exactly yeah.

P – So do you think that's to do with you and the way that your gendered identity can be expressed?

E – I think so yeah I think that's a personal thing because I know certain friends who feel way better in a dress than they would in a trouser suit so.

P – Do you think, erm on this fun spectrum I've got! Just thinking about what we were saying about your gendered identity. Do you think that you're sort of very feminine or?

E – I'd say more the masculine end really on that scale of things.

P – Yeah so what number would you think you'd be?

E – Like six or seven maybe.

P – Yeah, why would you say that? Talking about really your gendered identity. Obviously dressing masculine or feminine is kind of like an expression of gendered identity, but your gendered identity is more sort of how you feel isn't it sort of inside.

E – Is that to do with my identity inside do you mean?

P – Yeah. So do you well very sort of yes I'm a woman, all the things I'm interested in are female things, or thinking about the traits and your own personality traits that sort of thing. Do you think that you go almost more of what you would consider to be female traits or do you think you're kind of in the middle? Have you got some male sort of traits?

E – I'd say it's funny because it's all relative really it depends on who you compare. Like if I'm hanging out with certain groups of friends I don't think. It's like only when you're put into, like I had some friends in London and I always felt like really masculine next to them. Whereas a lot of my friends I hang out with now I don't feel like that I just feel, but it depends on the context I suppose. I suppose generally somewhere in the middle slash maybe a bit more masculine but.

P – Well that kind of fits in with what you were saying about masculine and feminine as sort of descriptions and traits where we're more kind of just people!

E – Yeah.

P – So you were saying that you play with gender with your clothing. Do you find that fun in fashion, the way that you can mess with that?

E – Yeah. I think it's fun to sort of, I suppose again its' context dependent because I don't think about it that much until I'm in a context where a lot of people are dressed very traditionally feminine I suppose. It's like when I went to the wedding in the trouser suit and I was probably the only person there, the only female wearing a trouser suit maybe, it was quite fun. I think it's really context dependent because then you'd could wear that to another. In fact! That wedding I was going to there I wore that there and didn't get as many comments. It was like an artist's wedding and everyone was wearing allsorts and it was just like!

P – Yeah so it's different.

E – Completely different environment.

P – Ok, we'll get onto these because I'm aware of the time. So if you could just have a look at these. These are photographs from a pilot I did and an exhibition and the idea was to sort of look at masculinity and femininity in clothing and sort of what body they're designed for. So if we just look through these, if you could tell me if you think the item is made for a man or a woman.

E – A man.

P – Why do you think that?

E – Just the shape of the shoulders and the sleeves maybe.

P – What is it about the sleeves?

E – Maybe it's the cuffs on them, they look kind of, like those bits look a bit chunky (Laughs) and maybe the collar. Maybe the way it's buttoned up to the top. Erm, a man maybe? I think maybe it's the detail and the button.

P – What is it about the detail and the button?

E – I think I've seen that a lot on back pockets of male trousers that sort of thing.

P – So the different coloured button you mean?

E – Yeah and the button's a bit practical isn't it. I've seen that on womenswear, but it's more a feature I've seen on maybe men's trousers. Err, a woman? I think maybe it's to do with the neckline. I mean obviously the colour's like pink, but I think like maybe I wouldn't think about the colour much just maybe the neckline. Maybe the length of it.

P – Do you think that colour is a think with clothing anymore?

E – Not really anymore no. I mean I know I wear a lot of like navy and black and things but I think that's more to do with what suits. I just think it suits my hair colour maybe. I think colour isn't as much of a thing anymore.

P – I would possibly, it's like a situation thing again isn't it? Like what is suitable maybe for what you're doing.

E – Yeah. Erm, they look like women's.

P – Why?

E – Maybe it's the length and the cut on the ankle. Maybe erm, it's hard to tell though really.

P – Do you think it would be easier to tell if they were on a person?

E – Yeah.

P – Why?

E – Without knowing much about fashion it's hard to tell how they would suit on someone I suppose.

P – Sort of how the body would fit. So these ones are two people in the same clothing. Can you tell me which one you think is more feminine?

E – Erm, I mean I suppose just because the one on the right has got long hair and things, it's got that kind of more feminine look maybe.

P – Is that the first thing you thought of when you saw it?

E – Maybe her body shape as well.

P – Erm so, would you say it was that one then you think?

E – I mean only in traditional ways, I don't see erm.

P – Did you feel initially that your initial reaction was to go for her?

E – Erm, not really because I sort of think femininity is, I'm just sort of thinking in a traditional way, but I think femininity is a lot of different things.

P – Ok, what about this one?

E – Which one looks more feminine?

P – Yeah.

E – To me the one of the left maybe.

P – Why is that?

E – I don't really know actually. I don't know which one looks more feminine! (Laughs)

P – Do you think that your view, when you're looking at the people. Do you think that either masculinity or femininity or how you see the person in the clothes has something to do with that person themselves? Like the way they wear the clothes rather than just the shape of their body? Kind of like a style thing.

E – Maybe yeah. Maybe it's to do with the haircut as well.

P – Do you think that there's a, you know say if you put on somebody else's clothes, you maybe wouldn't wear them quite as well as that person did? Even if they fit you? So there's kind of like a thing where certain people can wear certain things and certain people can't? Do you think that exists?

E – I think its maybe down to your own personalities to what you feel comfortable in.

P – So again can you notice a difference in the way that these two people sort of embody the clothing?

E – Maybe it's the way they hold themselves, the way, I don't know.

P – So what would you say? Can you say anything about that? It's quite tricky!

E – It's hard to tell without seeing them in real life I suppose. I think it's because it's a photo yeah.

P – Ok. So do you think if the photos were a bit more expressive it would be easier to tell?

E – Or if it was a video of them walking around in the outfit I might be able to tell.

P – So what do you think would make it easier? Like what from the video would make it easier?

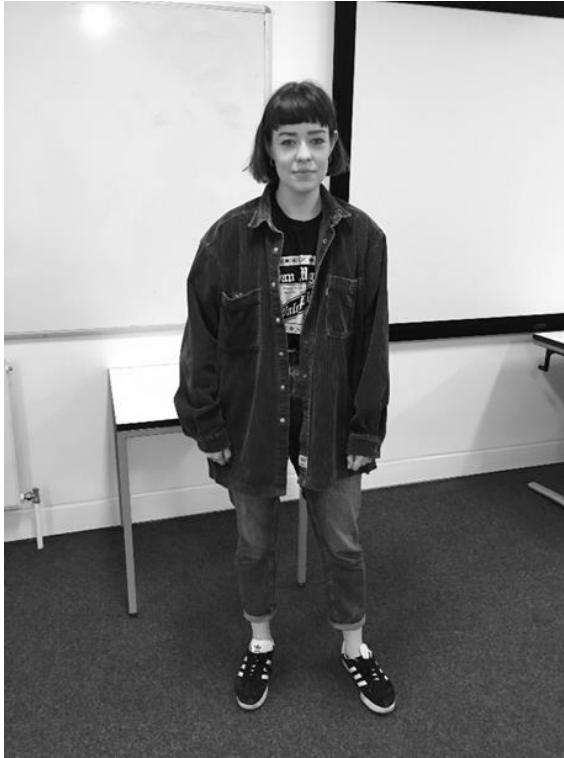
E – Just gestures and you can sort of tell how comfortable people are if they're moving around in clothing. Whether they're comfortable in the outfit maybe or not. Sorry that's not really answered the question! (Laughs)

P – No it's ok! It's hard, it's difficult to answer. I'm just going to make sure. Yeah that's fine we'll leave it there because that's your time anyway.

E – Ok. Has that been useful?

P – Yeah! Really good.





### Participant profile. ISABELLE.

Charity shops. Vintage shops. Adidas. .

*'Well I do like to be feminine, even though I like to wear men's clothing...I like to wear make-up, I like to have like a nice haircut. I like to have feminine touches to things, but I don't necessarily want to have everything frilly...like at the moment everyone is wearing those long sleeves with the frills around the front. I hate those! They're awful! (Laughs).*

It's got holes in it and stuff, but I quite like it! Big jackets. Comfort. PhD.

Occasion. Gender scale...probably a three or a four. I just don't like anything that looks too crowded... Men's kind of

**grabs me sometimes. Age 22. It's more for me... I just don't want to put that on display sometimes.**

ISABELLE is a first year PhD student in psychology, she has a strong sense of occasion and varies her outfits to suit. She has a daywear uniform of comfy and baggy, but for meetings uses womenswear in which being more fitted feels smarter; ISABELLE explains 'I was trying to kind of like come in looking smart so people would take me a bit more seriously'(ISABELLE). Menswear is ISABELLE's casual day wear 'because I like to feel just kind of like relaxed and comfortable. Erm, and not really care too much (laughs)' (ISABELLE). ISABELLE values comfort in daywear and often finds this in vintage menswear items which are '...a bit tattered' (ISABELLE) and '...loose fitting...' (ISABELLE). She enjoys the contrast of this baggy menswear look with her hairstyle which '...is quite like short and straight...' (ISABELLE), because likes '...to have feminine touches to things...' (ISABELLE).

LV wears womenswear when she goes out, finding that these items communicate her readiness to have a good time, and that 'I seem to gain more confidence...I can show a bit of midriff and wear a tight fitting top! (Laughs)' (ISABELLE). Of this more off-duty look she says, 'yeah people don't know me a PhD student there... They just know me as Lucy my friend...' (ISABELLE). ISABELLE notices that 'I wear a lot of women's clothing to go out in ... I feel quite feminine, but then the next day I'll just stick on like a hoodie or something and wear no make-up and go into uni you know...' (ISABELLE)

ISABELLE believes that masculine and feminine are socially and historically bound, she sees differences but does not see that these are currently relevant. When asked about gender representation in her clothing she said 'I don't think it's anything to do with my gender at all. I think it's more to do with what I like! (Laughs) I don't think it should be about that' (ISABELLE).

ISABELLE is comfortable in her body but sees flaws, she dresses to address this but is not overly concerned about it. She points out that 'I don't really like to show off like my bare arms...' or wear '...anything that would accentuate how big my hips are' (ISABELLE).

## Isabelle interview transcribe.

P - So, the questions to start with are about your own clothing. So what have you chosen to wear today?

I – Jeans that I always wear, Mum jeans I think and my boyfriend's t-shirt that he got me from the Philippines and the corduroy shirt that I always wear. (Laughs)

P – Is the t-shirt men's?

I – Err, yeah. Both men's shirt and top.

P – So what about the, erm these are the photo's that you sent to Facebook for me. So, do you want to discuss those for me? You can flick through using the arrows and talk about things like whether it's men's or women's wear, what you were doing that day, how you feel in that particular clothing.

I – I can't remember now! (Laughing)

P – Well anything that comes to mind really.

I – I think erm, yeah that's both women's clothing, the top and the jeans, but I liked that top because it's kind of like sporty. It reminded me of like cycling! I think that day I had like a meeting or something, erm I can't remember completely. Yeah I liked that top (laughs)! It was a new winter buy (laughs). Oh yeah I remember that. So that's like my typical, I don't have any meetings and I'm just sitting at my desk kind of wear. I just wear like jeans and a t-shirt and a jacket and I'll feel comfortable at my desk, because I like to feel just kind of like relaxed and comfortable. Erm, and not really care too much (laughing). Err yeah.

P – So is this? What's menswear and womenswear?

I – Just the jacket again and the corduroy shirt, but erm jeans are very loose fit, I think my boyfriend wore them once (laughing)

P – You wear that corduroy shirt quite a lot. Is there a reason for that?

I – Erm, I don't know. It's just. It's loose fitting and it's comfortable. I just keep saying comfortable! (laughing) I think that's a big deal for me. Yeah it's just something you can throw on that will go with everything.

P – Yeah, so would you use it sort of like a cover up or something?

I – Yeah pretty much. Like today I know it's nice warm, but I know it's going to be cold later so I thought I'd just bring this and I'll be ok (laughing)

P – Yeah (laughing)

I – Again, comfort. So men's jacket, men's shirt and then women's top and jeans and the same trainers I always wear. I think again that was err, I think we were going for drinks after uni or something and I didn't have any participants, I didn't have any meetings. That's pretty much what I wear.

P – So your jeans tend to be. Do you ever wear tight jeans?

I – I wear like black skinny jeans. I have three pairs of jeans. 2 like that and one black pair of skinny jeans and that's it (laughing) and I just rotate them! But the blue ones I like because they're just kind of loose fitting and they go with everything.

P – So you seem to go on a lot of these, on the casual days for a more voluminous top half.

I – Yeah, I think so. I like big jackets. In the winter I like to put lots of layers on, I don't have like a big coat, I think that was when it was quite cold. So just I wore like, I think I had a vest under that, so I had like four layers on and then I was ok because I could keep like taking things off and putting things on. I quite like that instead of having like this big bulky coat that you take around with you. Erm, yeah and I really like that jacket. I got it at a vintage shop, erm I think it's men's. It's like a men's denim jacket with

like a fleecy lining. I really like it. It's not the most, yeah it looks a bit tattered. It's got holes in it and stuff, but I quite like it! (laughing)

P – Is it, is it because it's warm? Or is it because of the size of it?

I – Yeah, warm and it's got lots of pockets, I really like the pockets! So there's like two pockets there and two pockets there and they all like button up. So I can just put everything I need, kind of like my phone, bus pass, keys, headphones kind of like all in there and you can do it up and if you're going out, going into a bar or something, you don't have to worry about like leaving things around. Just everything is there (Laughing)

P – Could you find that in womenswear do you think?

I – Maybe, but probably not as, like that feels quite round and quite baggy, whereas I think that women's is either quite like straight in a way, or a bit more close fitted? I don't think you could find it in new clothing as much, not as much as like older clothing. But I feel like a lot of women's clothing don't have a lot of pockets, or if there are pockets they're a bit useless pockets that they don't fasten up and they're just like there! (Laughing)

P – So it sounds like practicality is a big thing?

I – Yeah, for me I think it is. Being comfy, being practical and I don't know. I like to, it's kind of my style just to have everything a bit loose fitting. A bit...I don't want to say shabby! (Laughing).

P – Grungy?!

I – Yeah a little bit! (laughing) I don't know yeah. Because like my hairstyle is quite like short and straight so I like maybe my clothing a bit more loose and baggy. I think otherwise like because if I have long I'd just look bit blugh, blob! (laughing)

P – So do you think like you're creating a balance between the way that you style you hair?

I – I think so yeah, because I like to. Yeah, quite neat and short and clothing a bit more baggier and a bit loose fitting and kind of it's like you don't feel that you're on one side or the other, as much!

P – So, I think your hair is quite a typically feminine style. So do you think that that influences the way you dress as well as it being kind of straight?

I – Yeah. Well I do like to be feminine, even though I like to wear men's clothing, I like to have like, I like to wear make-up, I like to have like a nice haircut. I like to have feminine touches to things, but I don't necessarily want to have everything frilly and kind of like, I don't know. Like at the moment everyone is wearing those long sleeves with the frills around the front. I hate those! They're awful! (laughs).

P – Well, again, practicality I suppose?

I – Yeah, just and like things on things. Like bows and bits like that and erm, I don't like that, I just like to have it kind of plain and a bit. Because even when I'm wearing women's clothes I think they're quite plain in a way? Not plain, but like nothing added to it.

P – So you choose the plainer styles in the women's?

I – Yeah.

P – So, can you talk a little bit more about what you don't like about women's wear?

I – Erm, sometimes the fit. Sometimes I can't get it to fit my hips so much. Jeans are ok, but things like skirts and stuff, erm I think it just looks a bit like a mushroom! Just like sits there! Erm, and then some women's clothes like erm, just, I don't know. For example frills and stuff and I don't like erm. I'm just trying to think what styles I don't like at the moment. Err, a lot of erm, oh sorry I've gone blank. (Laughs) Erm, oh yeah ditsy prints. I hate like flower prints, I think that's just not me, but I can appreciate that women like it. But I just don't like anything that looks too crowded, or anything too kind of like thrown at! I think I used to when I was younger, used to like lots of flowers and stuff, but now I'm like just give me something plain and black! (Laughs)

P – Do you want to flick through and see the others.

I – Yeah. Oh yeah I remember that day. I was going to a conference or kind of like a workshop in erm, where was it, Warrington. I'd never been to Warrington before (Laughs) and erm yeah. This is me trying to be smart! So checks, it's all women again, so checked women's trousers and like a close fitting polo jumper. I notice that when I'm trying to be smart I go for like closer fitting clothes. Erm, so yeah that polo jumper I probably wear quite a bit. I think I've worn it quite a bit in the other pictures. Then erm, the checked trousers again. They're not skinny, but they're kind of smart to me because it's got a smarter feel with the fabric. Instead of wearing jeans it's kind of like I was trying to be a bit smarter. Even though they still are really comfy and I like them. (laughs)

P – So do you think that's because your baggier stuff is more casual?

I – Yeah, I think so and I'm trying to, because I'm new to this, I'm like a first year PhD student I was trying to kind of like come in looking smart so people would take me a bit more seriously. Maybe a bit like, yes I'm here to, I'm Lucy Walker I'm a PhD student blah blah blah, you know. Instead of like, hello I just rocked up! Otherwise people might think I'm a bit more, you know not taking it seriously.

P – Yeah, so you say that what you see as smarter clothing is creating a kind of image that you want to portray on that particular day.

I – Yeah definitely. Especially like peers and other academics, you kind of want them to be like oh yeah, she's looking smart, she's here to contribute in a way.

P – So do you think that it's possible to create that image but using baggier clothing, if it wasn't along that casual vein of t-shirts and things like that?

I – I think so. I think I have done before like erm. I'd wear like a cardigan or something like long which feels a bit more baggy, it feels like this, it feels like a cover-up, but then I'd wear something like a shirt under it or something. So it's kind of best of both worlds!

P – So when you wear this kind of outfit where you can see your figure more. Do you feel sort of comfortable to go about your day, in that clothing? Are you still happy to?

I – Yeah I'm still happy to. I don't have any hang ups about how I look in it, I just prefer to wear something a bit more casual.

P – So when you're setting yourself up for that more business-like day, does that make you feel a bit more

I – Yeah I think it does in a way. I think when I put on those clothes I think yeah I'm on. I'm going to go to this workshop and I look smart I look like I might fit in here in a way, err yeah. It does make me feel a bit more confident in that sense, to go into that environment. Where I would feel quite out of place if I was wearing the previous image. I'd feel like, oh what am I doing! I think I do put on clothes to be as like a, to make myself feel like I fit in with the place. I'm very aware of that. Like I was going out the other night and I thought everyone else was really dressed up and I was just wearing shorts and a top and I was like oh no, I'm too dressed down what am I doing! And everyone was like you're fine you're fine and I was like oh my god no! So yeah, I think I'm quite aware of like how I look in a situation.

P – In terms of fitting in?

I – Yeah I think so.

P – Do you think that's what you're doing with your more baggy casual clothing? Are you trying to fit in with a fashion or style you've seen or do you think that is more just like what you're comfortable in?

I – No I think that's what I'm comfortable in, because I know that I'm not really going to see anyone that day. I literally get on the bus, go into the office and sit down and then I'll leave at about five or six and erm, so those are the days where I kind of just don't really care about what people think. (Laughs).

P – Ok. Are there any more?

I – Yeah I think so. Yeah, that's kind of a mix between the two. I think I was going for a meeting but it wasn't too much of a really important meeting. So I was wearing my new winter boots because that was when it started snowing! And some Jodhpur pants and another shirt. That's a men's shirt, my housemate gave it to me! (Laughs) Erm.

P – I like that outfit.

I – Yeah it's nice.

P - Are they stretchy trousers?

I – Yeah like Jodhpur pants, stretchy kind of.

P – Yeah.

I – Yeah I like those kind of leggings, I feel comfortable in leggings. I go to the gym you know and like sometimes I can't be bothered to get changed so I just wear like that kind shirt and my gym leggings and then get changed there!

P – Do you always wear something bigger on top if you're wearing leggings?

I – Erm, yeah, yeah I would do. I'd wear jeans and something tighter fitting, but if I was wearing leggings I think I wouldn't, in a way, because it's kind of exposing my hips and my bum kind of area! (laughs) Erm, which I'm. I'd probably just pair them with just like a jumper of something. I don't know.

P – So do you think with the tighter bottom half, do you need to. Is it important for you to balance that out or? Is it something to do with your body shape that you're trying to like cover something up or level something out in some way?

I – Erm, I don't know. I think it's about. I always think I have a bigger bottom half than a top half, so maybe! (Laughs) Subconsciously!

P – Do you think it looks like that on the scan?

I – Yeah, like I always think I have like a wider hips than I do like a top, shoulders bit. But erm, I'm not bothered by it, it's more just like putting myself in proportion.

P – Yeah. So would you say that you use clothing to try and do that?

I – Yeah. I'd say so. Yeah, I like things with quite erm. Either I'll go all baggy and not really care or I like things with like a bit of a waist and like a shoulder, because it's like making myself look the same. (Laughs)

P – You do have quite a waist though don't you.

I – Mmm.

P - So not in a sense that you're concerned by your body, but just that you're aware of it would you say?

I – Yeah, I think so. I'm always like. I fluctuate quite a lot, so I'm a bit aware of like ok, with weight wise and especially when I'm stressed. So (Laughs)

P – It's difficult because we're sat a lot.

I – Yeah. A lot! Yeah, I don't know.

P – Were you surprised by your scan or was it just what you expected to see?

I – No I kind of expected that. Yeah, because I know I'm not like super skinny, but I'm not massive! I don't think I need to lose weight or anything, but I always think I have quite like chunky thighs. But that might be like because I go to the gym and I used to like horse ride a lot and cycle, so that's just like what happens! (Laughs)

P – Yeah!

I – Erm, but its ok! I'm alright with that.

P – Are there any more?

I – Oh yeah so like this is me going to the gym later and couldn't be bothered to put anything else on! (laughs) So I put a hoodie on! I also think I was quite hung over that day, so it was probably more just a get away from me, I want to sit at my desk and me comfy again.

P – Yeah.

I – That's quite a lot of my days, there's a pattern here! (laughs)

P – (Laughs)

I – Yeah again that's like a unisex hoodie and my gym leggings and my trainers. It's a really comfy hoodie, it's so warm! (laughs)

P – Yeah

I – Yeah and then I just go to the gym straight afterwards and don't really bother. I'm just like ok I'll just get changed there.

P – So you say it's a unisex hoodie. Would you say a lot of your clothes are unisex rather than men's or are some of them actually men's?

I – Yeah some, I don't know. Probably sold for men's but could be unisex in a way, but a lot of women would wear it.

P – Yeah

I – I don't specifically. I don't wear men's trousers because I don't like the way it fits me, but erm. A lot of the other stuff like t-shirts and jackets and stuff, I think that could be more unisex than particularly like male, but the way that they're sold is male but, erm yeah.

P – Do you buy a lot of vintage? Where do you get most of your men's clothing?

I – Yeah vintage or passed on to me from people. I don't probably, I don't actually go out and buy in a shop, like new men's clothes. I probably like get it passed on to me, like my housemate was like oh I don't want this do you want it, and I's be like yeah it's really nice. Or like my boyfriend would be like do you want this. I might buy a jacket from amazon, not amazon, EBay! Or something like that and so I don't particularly go into the men's section thinking oh I want to buy this men's whatever.

P – In a new store?

I – Yeah

P – Would you do that in a vintage shop?

I – No I think I just kind of gravitate to the men's stuff more, because in a vintage shop all the women's stuff is quite like weird sizing nowadays and the men's stuff is easy because you're just like oh yeah I like that t-shirt or that jacket. Where the women's stuff is kind of like those awkward, I don't know. I tried to buy some like leather shorts one time and I just couldn't find, out of like ten I couldn't find one pair that fit me because it was all like weird sizing. So I think for like ease, I just because I don't go into a vintage shop aiming to buy something, I usually just go browsing and if I see something that catches my eye I might buy it. Same with EBay, I just go on because I'm bored sometimes and browse around! (laughing) So yeah, I wouldn't say I go out to buy men's, but men's kind of grabs me sometimes.

P – Mmm. So when you're on EBay, are you searching, do you think, oh I want his colour or I'm going to look at jackets or

I – Yeah, I usually think about a piece of clothing. I'd be like I want a jacket or I want a shirt and I'd just type in like. Maybe if it's a certain print or something I might say like I want this print or something, but I won't go like you know, retro nineties red jacket! You know! It's more just having a look around and seeing what there is.

P – Erm, so I'm just going through my questions because we've covered a lot of them just in the chat so

I – Ok no worries.

P – I think we've covered this a little bit, but do you think that people perceive you differently when you wear men's clothing other than women's clothing?

I – Yeah, this kind of links into the whole like presenting myself, because I don't wear men's or say unisex stuff when I'm trying to impress. In a way! (Laughs) I don't I just don't! I don't know why, I just kind of think no, I need to look presentable today, let's put on that women's shirt and jeans you know or not jeans but trousers or something.

P – So we talked about styling a little bit with hair and make-up. Do you style yourself differently do you think when you wear men's clothing than women's clothing?

I – Yeah I think so. Probably, oh at uni I wear the same kind of make-up and the same hair, but with women's clothing or if I'm going somewhere that I think is a bit more important I might actually straighten my hair instead of leaving it a bit gross! Well not gross but if I wake up with like bedhead or something and I might wear like different shoes instead of just my trainers which I wear all the time every day. What was the question again? I've kind of lost it.

P – It was just about whether you style yourself differently when you wear men's or women's clothing.

I – I wear a lot of women's clothing to go out in and I do style myself a lot differently then. I'll put a lot more make-up on and I will go out and erm, I feel quite feminine, but then the next day I'll just stick on like a hoodie or something and wear no make-up and go into uni you know or very minimal. So I do kind of dress the part in a way! (laughs)

P – Yeah so that's interesting. So what do you think the reason is for you dressing more feminine when you go out?

I – I don't know I think I just. When I go out I want to feel, I want to like what I wear and like what I look like and be like yeah. I look good, I've got my skirt! (laughs) It's not for anyone else, it's more for me to be like, having fun with my friends and feel like yeah I look nice tonight.

P – So in the same way that you kind of dress smart when you go to a business occasion. Do you think that you're sort of setting the mood?

I – I think so yeah in a way! (Laughing) Yeah because it's kind of like, oh she's got her make-up on, she's going to drink some gin! (laughing) Hopefully not end up in a bad way! (Laughing) Yeah I think it is maybe because once you've, I think it's part of the process for me, I really like getting ready for a night out. I love that, I don't know why. Like getting ready, choosing your outfit, choosing what make-up you're going to wear, putting it all on! Like getting ready! It's the same way like I'll pick out my outfit what I'm going to wear the night before every day. Like I won't just go to my wardrobe and be like I'm going to wear that and that. I don't know why it's just always what I've done. I'll just like think what am I going to wear tomorrow and I'll just plan it out. I like to plan and get ready, like prep things! (Laughing)

P – That's probably organisation though is it? So you can get out of the house?

I – Not really, I spend a lot of time just fussing around sitting there, but I just like to think about what I'm going to wear the next day.

P – Oh right!

I – Yeah it's just something that I like to do, because I'll like think well what have I got on the next day? Oh I've got a meeting, oh yeah I'll wear this, this. What have I got the next day? Well you're just going to sit at your desk and do some data analysis, ok here's the hoodie here's the! Yeah so it's kind of like a, setting myself up for the next day I like to. It's the same thing as packing my bag and working out what I'm going to take for food or whatever, it's the same thing as what I'm going to do with planning my outfit. And erm, thinking about how I've got to act the next day.

P – So it seems like it's really important to you to be wearing the right thing?

I – Yeah in a way yeah. I do like to, I don't mean like just look good, but I like to like what I'm wearing and think it goes together.

P – And you seem very sort of, situation and occasion aware with your clothing as well.

I – Yeah.

P – What is that to do with? Is that to do with you feeling right or creating the right impression for other people?

I – I think it's me feeling right in the right environment, because I just wouldn't feel comfortable wearing something like this to like an important meeting. With like, for example I have to sit on the faculty research degrees meetings or I have to sit on ethics meetings and I wouldn't feel comfortable because it's like all these professionals sat there and erm like, a student! (Laughs) So it's for me to feel comfortable in that environment, I kind of dress in a way that makes me feel comfortable.

P – So it's interesting that when you go out you would wear sort of more feminine, would you say feminine clothing?

I – I wear tighter fitting clothing. Erm, depends what kind of night! (Laughs) Yeah for example we went out on Saturday to the northern quarter, so I wore like a playsuit and it was quite feminine. Then the other day we out out to, I think it was just like a party at my friends and I just put like my denim shorts and I wore like erm, similar to this kind of like jacket over shirt and a top. But again it's all kind of like a bit more tighter fitting, more feminine, bit more colourful, erm yeah.

P – Ok, so the things, say the playsuit. Would you wear that in the day?

I – No! That would only come out like, so I knew we were going to the northern quarter and I knew we were going to a bar that would only let people in if they were kind of dressed nicely. The shame thing is that we didn't get let in because someone was wearing trainers! (Laughing) But yeah, I wouldn't wear that to everyday.

P – No and is that to do with what you say about comfort?

I – Yeah, comfort and not being the right situation for it.

P – So, what kind of style is the play suit?

I – See it's very not me! It's got a long kimono sleeve and a V-neck and it's just like black with like shorts. Usually I wouldn't wear anything that was like frilly long sleeves, unless it was obviously a t-shirt. I don't know, I use my going out I want to look nice! (Laughs)

P – Yeah and erm, in that situation you're not working, you're not trying to get things done, so that makes a difference to what you feel like you can wear, frilly wise?

I – Yeah people don't know me a PhD student there. People don't know me as trying to do something in psychology there. They just know me as Lucy my friend, or Lucy my housemate's friend or something like that and they've got kind of no expectations of me to be something, or like say something, profound! (Laughing) Yeah so, I don't know.

P – I just want to talk about masculinity in clothing. So what is it to you that makes an item of clothing masculine?

I – I think it's probably the shape, so again it's not that kind of like tight body fitting, but it's more loose or square kind of cut erm yeah. It's not got any kind of like weird seams in weird places to like make it fit round your boob or your kind of thighs or something, it's kind of like loose and square. (Laughing) That's what I go for, I know there's men's clothing that don't do that, but for me that's kind of what I like in it. I get really annoyed when I can like swap clothes with my boyfriend and he fits in mine and I fit in his and I'm like that's not fair! Why are you my size?! (Laughing) Maybe like more rugged, loose edges or raw edges rather than like kind of nice folded seams.

P – What about fabric?



i – Yeah so not anything kind of like stretchy or satiny or kind of anything like that, I associate that with my going out clothes. Usually more kind of like plain fabrics, like denims and cotton shirts, like anything, so it's all a bit more stripped back in a way. It doesn't have any more adornments on it, or it doesn't have to have like linings and other bits like female clothing I associate with.

P – Are there any particular garment types that you think yes that's masculine, yes that's feminine?

I – Probably, I don't know. I wouldn't say garment types, more that I associate more with females with having more, like this one for example. It's a jumper yeah, but it's closer fitting and it's got like tighter, whereas if it was a men's jumper it would probably be a bit boxy, a bit looser.

P – So, with men's clothing, or any clothing, what is it about the clothing about the clothing fit that makes you like it?

I – My top half anything, I don't really mind. With the bottom half I find it really hard to get things to have like, fit round my hips and fit my waist ok, because I have wider hips than my waist. So then I get really disheartened when you go in and try on that pair of trousers and it doesn't go over the hips but you know it would fit around the waist, that really annoys me. Like things that erm, things that you can just like pull on I like, with the elastic! (Laughs) Yeah! I've got like a pair of culottes I love, you just yank them up and that's fine! (Laughs) Erm, yeah and erm, I don't really like to show off like my bare arms very often, so I wouldn't go for anything that. Yeah it's just more about the fit and I wouldn't go for anything that was like goes out, or anything that would accentuate how big my hips are. That sounds really bad now! But erm, I just know what works for me. Like I like things that are like ones that are just straight up and down. Yeah, I go for a lot of polo dresses, you know like buttoned up, short sleeved and then straight up and down. Yeah, I quite like that style because it's really like comfortable and it fits me well and it's kind of like I don't have to fuss around too much.

I – Yeah, it would be a more casual setting. Yeah like my Fred, I've got like two Fred Perry dresses. I just really like those for just like. It still looks smart, but it feels casual and it feels not too restricting.

P – So does that skim your body as it goes down? So no waist particularly?

I – Not really no. Yeah, it just like goes straight down and fits around the legs, that's about it.

P – So in terms of the shape of your female body. Do you think you've got quite a feminine shaped body?

I – Yeah I think I do.

P – So with that dress, you're sort of trying to miss all that.

I – Yeah in a way!

P – Do you want to do that do you think?

I – I don't know I think erm, it's a bit, I don't want to say showy off, because I think that people should show off, but I don't want to show off! Erm, yeah I just don't want to put that on display sometimes. Although I think, I think people should, I think people should celebrate what they've got, but sometimes I just don't want to, I just feel like it's too much effort! (Laughs) I'm a bit more aware of it so I think it's a bit more of an effort to me. Where if it's just a bit more like straight up and down, you know I can sit down and walk around, it's like I don't have to be aware of it.

P – Is that more specific to day wear? Than if it was evening wear? Or is that all the time?

I – Yeah, I think it's more daywear, eveningwear I seem to gain more confidence, maybe the alcohol maybe not, and I'm just there like yeah, I don't really mind! I can show a bit of midriff and wear a tight fitting top! (Laughs)

P – Do you feel erm? Does anybody look at you when you wear different clothing? Do people look at you do you think? Do you notice anything like that?

I – I don't think so erm, not really. I don't notice it anyway. But I think, my Mum always says that I'm a bit oblivious to how people look at me anyway. (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

I – I'm just there like (Laughs) Erm no, I wouldn't say so.

P – Ok. So my questions next are about how clothing choice is influenced by your body, but we've discussed all that. So these questions are about masculinity and femininity but not to do with clothing. Ok, so can you describe how you see masculinity?

I – Fragile! (Laughs) No not really, erm I don't know, I think erm, it's very culturally bound at the moment. For example I have house mates from Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and they are very much like we're men, we have come to England and we do this and men do this! They have very set rules. Whereas I think what I think and my friends, it's a bit more fluid, a bit more men can do what they want. Yeah, I was a bit taken aback by that cultural difference. I don't know if there's a, I still go oh can you move this, you're a man! More because it's just like physical strength rather than like, I think that men and women can do what they want. I think I'm straying from the question quite a lot.

(Laughs)

P – It's ok!

I – Yeah, erm, I don't really have set ideals about what men and women should do, I think you can do what you want, but it annoys me when other people do. When they say like, erm, oh erm yeah.

P – So do you think there are particular traits that are masculine? Or not anymore? How do you feel about that?

I – Traits like erm, personality traits? No I wouldn't really say so, I don't see any differences in personality traits. I think people think there are. It's the same thing if a woman is in the workplace and they're a boss they're called bossy, if a man is there it's kind of like leadership and strong. I think what people think are the different personality traits we have are actually really similar they're just mislabelled in a way. I think men and women are quite similar in how they act, but they are just placed differently, because they are seen differently. That's like with my Mum at the moment. She's in a leadership position and she's getting like dragged down for being like a bitch and bossy and stuff and it's like well, that wouldn't happen if it was a man. She's not being bossy she's being strong and she's trying to pick a right path for people, but it's just pointed out wrong. So yeah I think there aren't any differences, it's just the way people see them. In a way, yeah.

P – Why do you think people see men and women differently?

I – It's kind of like historical context isn't it! (Laughs) It's like female has always been kept by men, I'm getting all very deep and philosophical! I think so, I think it's just breaking out of those roles that we've always had. Which is hard because women are, I think women naturally are a bit more nurturing and caring, not saying that men aren't, but we kind of gravitate to those kind of roles a bit more, so then, forced into those roles a bit more.

P – Do you think the descriptions of masculinity and femininity have any relevance to where we live now?

I – Well I think men can be feminine and females can be masculine, so I don't think it can be like, I don't think it should be separated out into gender. I think maybe just use the terms as, descriptive rather than defining people. I always think, I used to like those, you know like the high fashion photoshoot with the men kind of like sort faced. I think it's really nice, yeah he's a man but he's showing that he's feminine with like soft focus and stuff, but then at the same time you could have a woman stand there like a typically masculine pose and it still looks good. I don't think it should be males are this females are this, I think it should be a bit broader now.

P – Do you think that you're masculine at all in any way?

I – Yeah I think I'm bossy, but that's the only thing I think it's masculine, but I think I am quite a bit headstrong sometimes and I know what I want and I know how to direct people. (Laughing)

P – Is it female traits?!

I – I think it's both, it's just what people associate it with.

P – What do you think people think femininity is?

I – Oh I think people think femininity is like being kind of like demure or looking after yourself more or kind of being aware of your body and looks and stuff. But I don't think that's what it actually is, I think it's more it's more to do about, like I said it's not about being a girl, it's about like being soft, being a bit more like. I'm trying to think of the words. I know it's like frilly (Laughs), but it doesn't have to be on a female.

P – No, ok. Erm, I've got a little fun gender scale here! So where do you think you would fit here numbers wise?

I – Probably like a three or a four.

P – Can you say why you think you'd go there?

I – Because I still feel feminine. Like I don't have any query about my actual gender, erm. Are you talking gender or are you talking femininity?

P – Yeah gender really

I – Gender, yeah. Well I would say yeah like a three or a four then because I know I'm female and I want to be female, I like being female, but I still quite like having those and I know I said I didn't have those, but male traits where I can be more assertive in a situation. I don't think that's anything to do with gender really. I wouldn't say I was a Barbie though, (Laughs) but erm.

P – But you don't dress in a very, what you would say is a typically feminine way do you?

I – No.

P – So do you think that the way that you dress is a reflection of your gender identity? Or is it more to do with the practicalities of your day as we discussed before?

I – Yeah. I don't think it's anything to do with my gender at all. I think it's more to do with what I like! (Laughs) I don't think it should be about that. I think males wear more feminine type of stuff and it doesn't mean that they're not a man or male, yeah I don't think it should reflect that anyway.

P – Ok, erm, have you always dressed in a similar way? Sort of like when you were growing up, can you remember dressing differently or was there a point where you changed how you dress?

I – I think I've always been a bit of a tomboy because I used to, like I said I used to like horse riding and every weekend I'd go to the yard and I'd just wear, you know anything that you don't mind getting messy. Erm, but then at the same time I did like dance classes and stuff so then you'd have to wear those horrible lycra costumes, which still give me scars! (Laughs) Yeah, but then I think I did go through a phase of trying to be a bit more girly-feminine, but that was when I'd developed a bit more. But now I've just gone back to thinking it doesn't really matter (Laughs) I think that was just a phase of me being like, I have to look this way and impress the boy at college! Yeah, it doesn't really matter anymore!

P – So, I've got some pictures on here that I used for a pilot study that I did. I'd just like you to have a look at them, have a flick through. Can you tell me which garments you think are made, are they made for a male or a female body? Can you tell me what you think?

I – It looks like this was made for a male one, because like a shirt you usually see like darts or something. This is just like up and down from what I can see and typically females have those breast darts (Laughs), which is so nice!

P – So is there anything else about that that you can discuss?

I – Obviously the tie. I've worn ties before, but I wouldn't typically wear a tie I think that's more typically male.

P – When did you wear a tie?

I – Erm, like I say like horse riding!

P – Oh yeah, at shows?

I – Yeah, I think the other times I was part of a choir or part of like catering, if you do catering you have to wear ties. Stuff like that.

P – So, to do with uniform type things?

I – Yeah. Uniform, functional. Yeah it's male, because obviously males wear it as a uniform for work in a way.

P – Yeah, that's interesting isn't it.

I – But also, women wear it for uniform all the time. Yeah, like if you look in the café all the women are wearing ties down there. It's interesting.

P – Yeah, and I wonder if it is for males like a way of putting on that uniform, like this is what I wear.

I – Yeah, I think it might be, they don't have to, I always envy males in a way because you buy like one suit and you wear that to how many weddings, and female you have to like, different dress every time or different outfit every time! Whereas they just have one thing and it'll do for a few years then they might get another one, it's kind of like less effort. I still like to, thing is I still love to pick out the dresses, I like to look at the dresses and all that, but then I get envious of like males, they don't have to bother! (Laughs)

P – So when you go to a wedding, where do you think sort of that fits with the sort of clothing you'd choose?

I – I think again it's kind of like, you're dressing for an occasion, I think a lot of my thing is dressing for occasion. Because, when I'm sat in my room on my own I'll literally just wear t-shirts and like pyjama shorts, like I don't really care! So it's more just like for a wedding I'll dress for a formal occasion. I went to my cousins a few weeks, in the summer and I wore like a nice dress, I did the thing because it was quite a posh wedding.

P – When you do wear those sorts of things and it's quite fancy. Do you feel quite fancy? Or do you feel like ugh!?

I – No I feel fancy I quite like it.

P – Yeah!

I – I like dressing up. I'll be like ooh this is fancy! It's like a graduation, everyone was dressed up and it was quite nice it was a nice occasion. You don't really see that, but erm, I wouldn't want to do it every day. Just kind of like a one off occasion, to be fancy.

P – Mmm, but people do! Don't they?

I – Yeah true.

P – Erm ok, next one. So what about this one?

I – That looks male as well, just because of the pockets. (Laughs) Just because there's more than one! Always back pockets as well, female clothes don't really have back pockets very often. I don't know, I can't really say anything about the shape because a lot of female trousers are wide leg now.

P – Yeah

I – But just the pockets kind of stood out to me.

P – Yeah.

I – Just because of the neckline, female. You don't really see that neckline on males very often, like just above cleavage boob height! (Laughs) Whereas I think males would be a bit deeper or wider across the shoulders.

P – What about the colours?

I – That doesn't really matter. I see plenty males wearing pink.

P – So do you recognise colour as being anything to do with male or female clothing anymore?

I – Not really, I think you can still look very masculine in a like pink shirt, or whatever you want to look you know. Yeah, colour doesn't really stick out to me as any particular associations. Mmmm, they're female I'd say, just because of the pockets again and the short fly and yeah the cut, it's quite a short leg.

P – Very perceptive! Ok, so with these two models they're both wearing the same clothes. Can you pick out which one looks more feminine?

I – I don't know really. I'd want to say the right, because of the long hair female, because like female but erm. They're both wearing the same, they both look feminine.

P – What made you say the one on the right then?

I – I don't want, it's the first thing that popped into my head, but like big boobs and long hair. (Laughs) Which goes against everything I've just said! But then when you're presented with an image like that you're like oh yeah feminine a bit more. Is that you?

P – Yeah. So the boobs and the long hair that you picked out. Why do you think that you did that, even though that's not your opinion particularly?

I – I don't know, I think it's just engrained in us isn't it. The feminine body shape, it's all over the place. It is like plastered everywhere.

P - Like where?

I – Like media, like whenever I look on social media it's there. Clothing brands especially, like the TV adverts and bits like that. You don't, although it is coming in a bit more, the body shape on the left, you don't see it as often. It's not represented as much.

P – Do you think that the clothing looks different? Let's just show you this one first. Can you pick out which one looks more feminine on there?

I – That's pretty similar. When you're put in the male, well shall we say baggier kind of clothes, it's like what we were saying earlier, it takes away that femininity. You know like signs of femininity or signs of being female. You can't really identify it as much anymore.

P – Yeah. So on the ones with the models. Do you think that the clothing looks different on each model? Sort of thinking about the way that the model is and kind of presents themselves and kind of, all the aspects that are there. Do you think, I mean are you just looking at the clothing and that they look the same or can you see differences there?

I – Well I was originally looking at the fit and the fit looks the same, but erm, yeah maybe just like the way they present themselves. There's a bit more, I don't to say edge to it, but edge to the left one you think maybe a bit more presence in it. Whereas with the right one I maybe think that she's a bit uncomfortable in it. She probably isn't, it's just what I'm kind of thinking.

P – Yeah ok. I don't know if the other one is different. So is it? What do you think about that one and the same question?

I – I can't really feel much difference in that one. Yeah, yeah that's pretty standard.

P – Ok. Do you think that that is kind of a thing? People looking different in clothing? Say if we were wearing the same clothing, not just the way that you're physically embodying the clothing, but the way that like you as a personality are coming through in clothing.

I – Yeah I think that impacts it, because it's obviously like how you want to present yourself isn't it. So yeah like, if I was to wear like what you are wearing today, I don't think I'd feel very comfortable because I hate having my shoulders out, I don't think, I wouldn't feel very confident walking out in it. Erm, but I don't think it would look much different, but it's just about how you feel in it.

P – Yeah

I – So it's just about personal choice and personal feeling, at one. (laughs)

P- Yeah, so do you think it's about thinking about maybe personality, confidence and that kind of thing?

I – Yeah definitely. You need to feel confident in what you're wearing, well you don't need to but it's better to feel confident in what you're wearing. Otherwise you're just not going to be. Well for me I think it's that confidence of being able to like, say something in a meeting or something. If I was feeling uncomfortable in what I was wearing and uncomfortable in the situation, it just wouldn't help anything! (Laughs)

P – Yeah

I – So I need to feel confident in myself to be able to speak out and be able to talk to people.

P – And you've also, you've indicated quite strong personal style ideas about this works with this and this works with this, and is the kind of clothing that you want to wear. Which is kind of your style. So do you think that personal style is quite a big thing for how people are embodying clothing?

I – Yeah definitely and if it is your personal style I think you can tell, because if you dress someone up in something that they wouldn't usually wear, they'd probably be a bit like, oh god! But if it's their personal thing, they've chosen that they'd be a bit more confident and a bit more, yeah this is what I like!

P – So is that what you were saying about this picture here?

I – Yes I think so, but I don't know, that woman might love that shirt. I don't know, there's kind of an association that she might not.

P – Yeah ok. Well that's my stuff! Yeah ok, that's it! Done!



### **Participant profile. Louisa.**

Burtons, Next, Debenhams, Tesco, Gap, John Lewis, Charity shops, Adidas, Superdry, Levis, Merrell, Fat Face,

***‘...you’ll get a shirt in a women’s part of store and then, it’ll be fine, it would be like a boyfriend cut and then they’ll just do some feminine little flowery thing or a bow. Like why have you done that and then it’s just so infuriating!’***

**Dark colours. Blue. Grey. Jeans. Jackets. Shirts. Brogues. Smart. No frills. Decent collar (stiff). Cotton. Boy’s clothes. Shane from the L-Word. Gender scale 8. I hate pink! I don’t like clingy. I love a plaid shirt who doesn’t. Prints and pattern. Always covered. Age 42.**

LOUISA is a part-time lecturer in social work at MMU, also working externally in the field; she is a feminist and strives to do well at work. LOUISA dresses in men’s clothing entirely; identifying as a female and a lesbian, she feels that her way of dressing is a reflection of both her gendered self and her sexuality. Although LOUISA finds herself to be ‘soft as tripe really...’(LOUISA), she realises that ‘...outer, how I portray myself, I’d go more on the masculine side whereas inside I’m very sensitive and all the feminine qualities really’ (LOUISA). She makes the observation that ‘a lot of my friends wear similar clothing to me...we all carry it with the same kind of style or swagger...it’s quite distinctive to lesbians ...You can tell somebody who wears boy’s clothes but it’s not about sexual identity or gender it’s just about style.’ Reflecting upon this in terms of her own style LOUISA states ‘...this is who I am. Not really about what I wear, but it helps’ (LOUISA).

LOUISA feels comfortable in men’s clothing, specifically jeans, cords, shirts, t-shirts, hoodies and suit jackets, finding that womenswear ‘...feels too girly and feminine which isn’t really how I see myself’ (LOUISA). She describes herself as ‘...a bigger girl, err, quite shy...’ which is her logic for choosing dark colours as ‘I don’t want to draw too big attention to myself with bright colours’ (LOUISA). The difference in her own dress sense to those who she sees as ‘cool dykes’ is noted by LOUISA. She aspires to that look, believing that it will ‘...fit better’ (LOUISA) as she loses more weight, ‘I’d be rocking that! I’d be Shane from the L-Word, rocking like heroin chic in my shirt and jeans!’ (LOUISA).

The shape of LOUISA’s body is typically feminine, which she aims to correct with clothing to ‘yeah, skim my curves’ (LOUISA), preferring heavier weight fabrics ‘...because it just smooths out any lumps and bumps really’ (LOUISA). Of skinny jeans she finds they are ‘...no good with thunder thighs, so I go more for a straight cut because it just sort of evens the weight of my legs out’.

## Louisa interview transcription.

P – Ok so I've got all of your lovely pictures here!

L – Haha!

P – So if you want to talk about them, tell me what you were doing, why you wear the clothing, you know sort of if you like the way it fits. Then you can just skip through.

L – Ok duck. So this one is, I'm at erm, I think this is MMU job, so this is my lecturing job. It was quite cold I think at this point, so I was having to wear a jumper. I usually wear dark colours, I think because I'm a bigger girl, err, quite shy, so I don't want to draw too big attention to myself with bright colours. So I go more for dark colours and I think they're slightly more slimming anyway. Err, I usually wear jeans, but I try and wear a coloured jean for work if I can, except today, because it looks slightly smarter than blue jeans. Erm, jackets a bit big on me now, it's got bigger because I lost more weight so it's kind of hanging off me a little bit. So I've had to buy some more clothing which is annoying. My shoes are Clarkes girl's brogues, but they're pretty none gendered really. I just love a brogue! I think they're smart for work, so that's that really.

P – So you say this is MMU, so if you went to your social work job would you dress differently to that?

L – Probably less likely to wear jeans but if I do it would still be a coloured jean. So, I'd more likely wear my cords or a light pair of trousers, just because I think, I work with older people and I think they'd find jeans a bit disrespectful if I'm going to go and do an assessment. A bit too informal, and I've worn suits for big meetings where it's like safeguarding stuff, just to show you're giving it the gravitas it deserves really.

P – Yeah like so dressing for occasion.

L – Yeah.

P – And making sure that you're kind of fitting in with

L – Yeah definitely

P – Is that what you expect or what you think other people expect?

L – A bit of both I think. I couldn't turn up to my social work job in a t-shirt. That's too informal, it's a professional career. You know, I wouldn't want a doctor sat in from of me in some sloppy t-shirt and jeans.

P – Yeah. So is that what everybody

L – Yeah. Everybody has kind of a work wear that they have so, and you know the girls in my team probably wear, if they're wearing a skirt it would be a long skirt, it wouldn't obviously be a short skirt.

P – So you said you wear a suit. Would it be a guy's suit? So you always wear a guy's suit.

L – Yeah. I don't like the cut of girl's suits brings you in in the hips. It feels too girly and feminine which isn't really how I see myself. It doesn't go over your bum, which because I'm self-conscious, I'm like ugh. I'd rather buy bigger clothing.

P – So you're wearing men's clothing mainly to sort of skim your curves a little bit?

L – Yeah, skim my curves, because I don't see, I'm not very feminine so I don't, it doesn't fit my personality really.

P – You mean you're not very feminine, in your personality, like the way you are the way you feel, rather than the way you look?

L – I'm soft as tripe really which is a feminine quality, so and I think if you've got short hair you can come across quite harsh and whatever but I'm not that personality. But I suppose typically feminine, outer, how I portray myself, I'd go more on the masculine side whereas inside I'm very sensitive and all the feminine qualities really. Erm, but then I've got an edge that would be akin to masculinity as well and a



drive to do well. Which comes across as arrogant for women whereas it's just you know strength of character for a man.

P – Yeah, erm so you feel like you'd rather portray yourself as kind of like that, more masculine. Would you say that that's what you're doing?

L – Yeah it's just, it's not even a conscious thing, it's just how I feel comfortable. Yeah, my Mum when I was born, she knew I was going to be a girl so she had 20 dresses all ready for me when I was born. As soon as I could pick my own clothes I was in jeans and t-shirt.

P – Yeah.

L – So from the age of five, six, seven, upwards, I have not wanted to be in dresses or skirts. Like I suppose, if you work like with people who are trans or on that spectrum, it's like, I've never felt I'm in the wrong body, or anything like that. I just know my style is not what you'd class as feminine.

P – So erm, yeah. So, you just don't want to draw attention to any of the sort of more feminine parts of your body.

L – Yeah, I'm not keen on big boobs and I've got big boobs, so it's like, you know I'm like. It's that I'm quite shy, so I'm embarrassed. It's not that I don't like having boobs, it's just you know, it would be better for me if they were smaller because they'd fit my style of clothing better. If I could have a boob reduction would I? Yes I would. If it didn't hurt and it didn't cost a load of money! (Laughs)

P – Two problems there!

L – Two problems there! So losing weight I'm going down boob size, but I think I'll always had big boobs, I'd rather, I'd never have a pushy up bra or anything. I'd be really embarrassed about that.

P – Do you wear a bra?

L – Yes.

P – Do you. I suppose if you've got bigger boobs you have to.

L – You got to, else I'd just be tripping over!

P – That's no good!

L – No not good! Erm, so.

P – So your choice of men's clothing is to do with the shape. What else? Colours?

L – Yeah I like the colours more. I hate pink! Really hate pink. My daughter loves pink.

P – Is that because of what you think it signifies or?

L – I don't know! Blue's my favourite colour. Is that because it's masculine and pink is the feminine? I don't know, I've just never liked pink. I like red! (Laughs) I don't like the fluffiness that goes with the idea of pink I think.

P – So possibly it's the idea of pink

L – Yes it's gendered stuff. Yeah I suppose I'm buying into that by not embracing the pink.

P – Yeah.

L – Because I don't like, I do none gendered clothes for my daughter. The odd time we do buy her a dress but why not, because clothes are gendered. Erm, I have rows in Burtons, Next, anywhere where I'm trying men's clothes, they're like you'll have to go to the women's part. I went, how do you know I'm not trans?

P – Yeah, yeah.

L – And also I'm not going to see anybody's bits, we're in cubicles, and their queue is massive! (Laughs)

P – Also yeah, because some of the guys shops are just separate shops aren't they so where are you going to try that on?

L – Exactly. Usually Burtons is with a Dorothy Perkins or next to, like the ones I've been in, and the burtons ones where it's not, or Debenhams, Debenhams as well I've had to go from the boys part to the girls part to try on the boys clothes.

P – Is that their policy?!

L – No! I asked them I got a manager and I went, you're stopping me from going in can I get a manager please? I was just fuming! I was like It's a massive queue for the girls and I'm trying on your boys clothes. I've got to go right over the other side of the store to then bring back your clothes that I don't want to have! So anyway, in the end they said oh well no. Debenhams are very bad at it. Are they British or American store? No I don't know. So in the end I think I caused such a fuss they just let me do it to shut me up. (Laughs) And I said and I'll keep doing this so it's up to you.

P – Yeah, it makes no difference because it's cubicles anyway.

L – It's cubicles!

P – I don't understand it. I don't understand the toilets either.

L – No I don't. We've got none gendered toilets upstairs.

P – I just don't get it!

L – No! Apart from urinals where I don't really want to see somebody's bits, but you know. You don't have to have urinals, you could have cubicles at one end and urinals right down at the other end no one would see anyway.

P – Yeah it's crazy.

L – I don't know! Sorry!

P – Anyway, let's flick through these. We digress!

L – Yes!

P – So am I on the right? Yeah there you go you can flick through and see. No wrong way.

L – That way? Ok. (Laughs) Me at home chilling on the sofa in a sloppy jumper, just a boys jumper from Tesco or somewhere like that.

P – Yeah

L – I just like the colours because it's blue and grey.

P – So at home do you just like joggers.

L – Joggers, yeah usually like some lounging pants or something! (Laughs) Cheapos from Aldi!

P – (Laughs)

L – I don't like shopping much. So if I can do a Tesco shop and get clothing. Happy days!

P – So are you not particularly, are you dressing? Obviously you've got to wear clothes. Is it more like that than it is like a fashion thing?

L – Yeah I'm not very interested, I can't be bothered. I think as I'm, like I've bought a new top or something, but I don't like paying a load for clothes, especially if you're losing weight because then you've got to pay more again because you lost a bit more. Yeah, we just got rid of a load of clothes that don't fit anymore, but I'm gutted to let go of my shirt that I've had for about four years that I just loved, because it were just massive!

P – Was it really big? You wouldn't want to wear it like that?

L – It was really big, it was drowning, but I loved it! So I wear the same stuff year in year out. It gets a bit boring and I think oh I should shop, but then if you are a big girl you don't like trying on clothes. You can't be bothered because you think oh it's not going to fit, or it's not going to look right because men's cut don't fit on the hips, or a bit tight round the boobs! So, but I'm not, you know, M&S do a range where sometimes it's slightly better for women, shirts are not as feminine, but yeah it's still like, it's M&S isn't it?!

P – To be fair, I mean what size are you though?

L – I don't know! At my heaviest I was a 22 and now I keep getting I think a 16 women's.

P – See because like, say you wanted to wear women's, clothes get really Mumsie at that kind of size.

L – Yeah they do.

P – So do you think that when you weigh less that you might consider like, would you wear women's clothes? Say like women's trousers, that kind of look like men's trousers but that might fit you in a different way? Or are you

L – Yeah, I would, what I don't like a lot with women's trousers, and men's, is the zip and I quite like buttons. They're just more comfortable.

P – Oh yeah. You tend to find

L – On men's jeans you get more buttons than women's so that's why I like the boys jeans as well because you get more buttons, they're just more comfy. I would wear them if they did, because you'll get a shirt in a women's part of store and then, it'll be fine, it would be like a boyfriend cut and then they'll just do some feminine little flowery thing or a bow. Like why have you done that and then it's just so infuriating! I don't think I go in the girl's section hardly ever, I'm like straight to the boy's not interested.

P – So it's those little details?

L – It's those little details it's just like ugh!

P – So is it that about female clothing that really puts you off?

L – Yes! That and it's always just to accentuate your lines which I don't really want to do.

P – Yeah because obviously men's clothing tends to be

L – General straight up and down really.

P – I suppose you can get men's clothing that's a bit fancier now but you to find the things you want I guess it's just easier.

L – It's just easier and you know, they do more different shirts. Women's is either blouses of the odd shirt, but it's still a feminine cut. So you don't get as many nice patterns and stuff and colours.

P – Something that's trying to be a men's shirt.

L – But it's not quite there.

P – Yeah, ok.

L – Ok, so err, that's one of my favourite shirts.

P – I like that shirt!

L – I love that shirt! I can't remember where that's from. Maybe Burtons or somewhere like, or Next, but it's got little, we're not sure what it is but it looks like dandelions. Erm, yeah I like that!

P – Does it still fit?

L – Err, it's still a bit big, but I'm going to carry on for a bit longer! (Laughs) Yeah I like that! Are they my cords or? Let me just see, I don't know what they are. Are they cords? Are they navy cords? It's hard to tell the light in my house is rubbish.

P – I think they might be.

L – Yeah, cords, they're my Wrangler navy cords I like them. Yeah just boy's stuff. I can't remember what that was, maybe a day out or something. I was getting ready for work or a day out, one of the two. (Laughs) Yeah, oh it's not working. Yeah! So that's it, it looks. I don't know what it is?! It looks a bit like, it's just a pattern!

P – Is that the same one?

L – It's the same shirt!

P – It's lovely!

L – Yeah I really like it, it's just a nice, nice pattern. (Laughs) But I don't know what it was for. Ah that's me at home! I'd obviously got a day off, got my old retro TV t-shirt on.

P – So days off, is it more like hoodies and stuff?

L – Yeah, hoodies, t-shirt, trainers, I'd wear trainers and just a pair of jeans. Slobbing around.

P – Yeah.

L – Yeah. Oh! That was me! (Laughs) That was me at my course, hilarious! Bit scruffy, but black and grey jeans, my shoes. That's the shirt I had to get rid of because it's too big!

P – Right!

L – I love it!

P – You say that's scruffy! I don't think that's scruffy at all.

L – Do you not?

P – Well no, but I suppose if you're at work maybe it feels that way.

L – It felt a bit scruffy.

P – Is that more of a casual.

L – It is more of a casual but because half the afternoon was being taught myself I was like I thought I can dress a bit more dirt bag! (Laughs) So, my jacket just to try and smarten it up a bit.

P – I think people are smarter in this building aren't they than the

L – I think they try to be, because it's a profession. That's my new shirt that I bought, when I lost a bit of weight! It's got feathers on it. That's Burtons, when I went to Nottingham teaching.

P – So that does actually, like that fits you doesn't it.

L – Yeah.

P – Because I know a lot, some people that I've interviewed are interested in like volume in men's things. You know they want it to be bigger. Whereas you, you're just looking for stuff that fits you.

L – I am, yeah which is near impossible.

P – Yeah, yeah.

L – Yeah it's not only about covering up, as much as I want to lose a bit of weight. It's more about it's my style, but I want it to fit better.

P – Yeah.

L - So there was a really nice shirt that I tried on but it just didn't go over my hips.

P - Right.

L - Everywhere else was perfect. But I just couldn't do up the bottom button.

P - Is that because of your shape in general or is it because you're a bit heavier at the moment?

L - I think it's my shape because my hips are quite wide. I've got good child bearing hips!

P - Because you've got quite a feminine figure.

L - I suppose I have when you look at that thing we did. Its' it's kind of, yeah.

P - Waist!

L - I am kind of, I go at the waist and then I've got a booty and I've got boobs, you know. So yeah I have and trying to hide that or you know, feel comfortable in that is difficult.

P - How do you think you, and I suppose it's a difficult question, so I don't know if you can answer it. But do you think you would feel differently about the kinds of clothes that you picked if you had a more of a boy shaped body?

L - If I had more of a boy shaped body the clothes I wear would be a few sizes smaller and I would look great in them! (Laughs)

P - So you'd probably pick the same stuff?

L - Same stuff, just sizes down.

P - And you just think you'd, rock it then?!

L - Basically I'd be rocking that! I'd be Shane from the L-Word, rocking like heroin chic in my shirt and jeans! Basically! So yeah.

P - I love that shirt though it looks great!

L - Thank you. I love that shirt. So, that was me going out on a date night with my girl I think. Ok. That's me in my PJ's! (Laughs) I was tired! Yeah so I was like Oh Pip I've not done a photo for ages, can you just do me a photo? So they're my Gap men's Christmas ones! That I got this year! Just a Fat Face t-shirt, bedtime t-shirt, I think it says something about tea. That's my chill out. That's me on the way to Nottingham to go teaching, navy cords, my brogues, I love a plaid shirt who doesn't.

P - Yeah.

L - Where did I get that from? I said at the time and I can't remember.

P - Is it a men's coat as well?

L - No! That's a ladies coat. The reason that I got a ladies coat is to do it up, because any boy's coats I got wouldn't do up. So they'd fit everywhere else, but wouldn't do up and it was freezing in Manchester, so I was like I've got to consent, you know kind of give in to get a girl's coat. So that's a John Lewis expensive coat, which was the least feminine one I could find but, it's got this stupid big hood that I think if you had loads of hair you could put it up. It's like a massive hood, but it doesn't keep the cold out because it's got massive gaps. So it's good for doing up over boobs and hips, but the hood's rubbish.

P - Yeah. So hips are a problem aren't they with straight up and down things. If you want them to fit your shoulders because you're quite narrow really.

L - Yeah I'm not that massively broad.

P - So you said you had to relent. So like you actively avoid women's clothes then you don't want to go there?

L – Actively yeah, because I just think ugh, I’ve had negation with them for years so I think it’s more habit than anything.

P – Yeah. Does that feel sort of masculine enough? Does it fit?

L – Yeah it’s alright. It’s just warm. It was more needs over anything else.

P – It was cold though wasn’t it!

L – It was super cold! So I was like I need warmth! I don’t care what I look like! (Laughs)

P – Yeah (Laughs)

L – Erm, so, that’s that! Err, black shirt and I don’t know what jeans they are? They might be the cords again. That’s my daughter. (Laughs) Yeah, probably the navy cords. That’s just a black shirt, getting ready for work, bit smart, boy’s black shirt. I think I probably got that from the charity shop actually.

P – Do you go in charity shops very often?

L – Yeah, love ‘em! Bargain!

P – So charity shops, or like those vintage sales or just charity shops?

L – Err, been to vintage sales but it’s just charity shops really because vintage, if you’re thinking ‘70’s, ‘60’s, ‘70’s, skinny buggers!

P – Yeah!

L – So err, it’s alright if you’re dead skinny! You can fit in vintage, but if you’re not, don’t even bother! So it’s like just second hand clothing now really.

P – Yeah.

L – Is the best idea for me. So yeah, Cheadle where I work for social work. Loads of charity shops.

P – Oh and good ones as well.

L – Really good ones and loads of kids clothes as well. I always come back with stacks for Violet, so she loves it. She’s like ooh what have we got now! So that’s, that’s me in a maroon jumper that I love and I think that’s from maybe Tesco men’s, my Adidas trainers which I love which are boys, err my girly coat. I think we were just going out for a drink or something. Erm, Levis t-shirt from Levis boys, err navy corduroy I can’t see. Just a t-shirt. My gillet! My Superdry gillet, boy’s gillet. That never used to do up, it can do up now so my boobs must have gone down quite a bit, so I can do that up now.

P – It’s a good outfit. It’s quite a classic guys outfit that!

L – It really is isn’t it! I’m like a lumberjack or something!

P – It’s good yeah!

L – So yeah, and just a plaid shirt that I love. Probably from Debenhams actually.

P – I love plaid shirts, you can get really good ones from vintage.

L – They’re really nice.

P – Do you ever get any comments from people about wearing men’s clothing?

L – Yeah sometimes. My sister struggles with it, she’s quite funny. I don’t go shopping with my sister anymore, she’s lovely but her and her husband come to Manchester once and we were going clothes shopping all of us and she’s older than me, she’s in her fifties. We were shopping and Deano, her husband hated the fact that we were going into the men’s department for me and she struggles with it, she was like oh why don’t we just check the women’s department first before we go straight to the men’s? I went, why does it matter to you?

P – Yeah.

L – Why are you embarrassed? You're not trying on nothing? So I think yeah, they struggle with it a bit. Erm, I think it all ties in with the sexuality side of it as well and it's just like get over yourself! It's fine!

P – Do they not get any of it then?

L – Yeah they do now. My brother-in-law's not homophobic towards me, but he struggles with gay men.

P – Right

L – Yeah so, erm yeah. I think through the years, like work people might comment, like I've got some Merrell sandals and I think they're boy's ones, they're well comfy. They're oh stop wearing Jesus sandals! Like with the girls in my team, they always turn up dead nice and stuff and I'll say oh that's a nice top blah, blah. Very rare anybody will comment on my clothing, very rare, and it's like, every now and then it's like oh I like that blue! Brings out your eyes blah, blah, blah, but it's quite interesting.

P – Maybe they just can't relate to what you're wearing?

L – I think that's part of it yeah! I get it more off the boy's than off the girls! It's like oh I like that shirt Michelle where was that from? (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

L – And it's like ooh Debenhams!

P – But that kind of makes sense!

L – It does make sense! But it's not 'till you think about it, it's like oh but the boy's yeah, yeah! And I'll say to the boys, oh my god love that shirt! So yeah!

P – So do you think if you wore more women's clothing then that you have different relationships with the people that you work with? Do you think it would make any difference or?

L – I think it's the other thing isn't it? Being other? I don't know. No because I get on brilliantly with my work colleagues, they couldn't give a toss if I came in a black bag really. I think if I worked somewhere different to social work it might be different.

P – Maybe.

L – But I work with very lovely people! (Laughs) Who, it doesn't matter what you wear. So, no I don't know. I think my relationships are pretty good, doesn't matter.

P - Do you dress differently, I mean we've discussed work and stuff. I wanted to ask about occasions, so if you dress differently for occasions. Like I know you've got different work outfits, so if you were going on a really fancy day, like going out on a date or like going to a wedding. What kind of things would you wear?

L – Erm, so going to a wedding is going to be exactly what I wore for my recent interview, because it's kind of some men's Fat Face, erm lightweight navy, I can't remember the material, cotton trousers, with a jacket to match. It's kind of suity, but it's linen, linen jacket, navy linen jacket. Then it's the white shirt with the feathers, so I'm going to wear that to a wedding with my brown brogues and Pip's got a navy dress I think she's wearing, so we'll tie in. So that's what I'd wear for a wedding, it'll always be a suit for a wedding. Erm for, if I go out for like somebody's birthday or something, I'd probably wear, I'd still wear jeans and probably shoes and a shirt and a jacket. (Laughs) It's err, it's not very exciting!

P - So does your daywear sort of merge into your fancy wear?

L – Yes! It can do and sometimes I'll change something I've worn outside of work to work if I've worn it a lot.

P – So like a day to night kind of thing?

L – Yeah it's a day to night thing.

P – Yeah, I'm like that though, I don't really do really going out stuff.

L – No, does it smell? No I'm good! Is there snot or baby sick on it?! I mean no we can go! Wet wipe!

P – So, I'm not sure if we've covered this but we'll do it again. What do you think makes an item of clothing masculine? Like what are you looking for?

L – Tailored cut, but not too, can't get skinny fit.

P – By tailoring you mean like it looks smart, sharp? That kind of thing?

L – Yeah, smart, sharp lines, not frills. Erm, a decent collar, because on girls stuff you've got to kind of iron in the collar. Whereas these already feel a bit more sturdy, I don't know if it's because of the material they use more? But a sturdy collar rather than a feminine gentle collar.

P – It's got stiffening in.

L – Is that right? So more stiffening. Erm, I don't know really.

P – So you'd pretty much always have a shirt on if you're at work?

L – Yes.

P – So you see that as the men's version of smart?

L – Yeah, I would. Yeah, I kind of look down myself at the other lecturers who are just in a t-shirt, like make an effort mate you're at work! (Laughs)

P – Yeah I suppose. Do you think with womenswear you can get away, you can sort of create an illusion of smart using different sorts of clothing?

L – You can. You can have a nice light jacket over like a round neck.

P – Yeah.

L – Floaty top or something. So yeah I think, boys are more restricted on what smart is. So therefore I think I'm probably more restricted on what smart is.

P – Do some of the guys here wear t-shirts?

L – Yeah.

P – Is that what you mean where?

L – Yeah, it drives me mad. I'm just like that, you've come to work, you're going to teach, you're not going to teach in that are you! You know!

P – Yeah.

L – And it's just like, yeah, doesn't feel right.

P – Yeah. So yeah I see what you're saying.

L – (Laughs)

P – So erm, so the characteristics you're looking for are straight up and down, nice and sharp, smart. Do you think that fabric contributes to the types of clothing that you like?

L – Yes probably! I like cotton stuff I don't like clingy, err

P – What like silk type things?

L – Yeah, silk's no good if you've got lumps and bumps, or any kind of clingy material really. So, cotton I'd probably favour and jeans, jean material.

P – So like heavier?

L – Heavier, yeah heavier duty because it just smooths out any lumps and bumps really.



P – So, in terms of femininity. What would you say is feminine in clothing?

L – Dresses and skirts, there's not many men you'd find in dresses and skirts. Unless you're down Canal Street and that perfectly fine. Erm, blousy type things, anything overly, I like a floral shirt I like my men's floral shirt. Anything very flimsy looking, is quite feminine and romantic looking. Err bows, I can't do bows and things, I just find it irritating. Anything flouncy really! Anything I'd wear like that I'd look like a drag queen!

P – Would you wear, because like you can get some quite flamboyant guys shirts? Would you go for that?

L – Oh yeah totally!

P – Holiday shirt?!

L – Oh I've done that! Flamboyant boy's shirts! Fine! I think it's the bows, the details, the sparkles.

P – So questions about fit we've discussed. Your body we've discussed. Do you think that you can, we've partly discussed this. Do you think that you can make your body look different through your clothing choice?

L – Yeah! Yeah, yeah well, getting away with the clothing that's way too big, if they're a bit more fitted you do it just narrows you. As long as it's just skimming the bits that aren't quite how you want them yet then that's all good. Erm, like skinny jeans, no good with thunder thighs, so I go more for a straight cut because it just sort of evens the weight of my legs out.

P – Are your legs sort of big all the way down or

L – Yeah, I've got big, I've got quite, they're shapely! But I've got chunky, err what are they called?!

P – Calves!

L – Calves! I've got chunky calves, I've done a lot of cycling in the past and boxing and stuff and these have always been thunder thighs! I get these off my Mum! So err, they're not going nowhere!

P – So are you saying that in wearing clothes that fit you now, you think that it makes you look?

L – It makes me look slightly slimmer than dousing myself in big clothing all the time, because I'm not as big as I was, so you can see my bum more. It is coming into my waist a little bit more but not too feminine.

P – So as you lose weight

L – I'll just keep going down the sizes.

P – So have you gone along the path before of just wearing big stuff, not because it fits you but just to like cover?

L – Yeah, definitely. I think self-consciousness. Self-conscious for the big thing, self-conscious for the gay thing. It's just that whole self-conscious thing. It kind of masks that a bit.

P – Are you self-conscious with the gay thing?

L – I was back in the day!

P – Yeah.

L – I'm not so much now! (laughs) No.

P – Have you always dressed as you dress now?

L – I'd say since uni yeah, so twenty-odd years.

P – So did that coincide with knowing that you were gay or was it kind of like I'm going to show people that I'm gay by wearing this clothing? Or are you just feel more comfortable?

L – I think I always wore jeans and t-shirt as a kid and teenager. Wearing, actually going and buying men's clothing didn't happen 'til I got more confidence in who I was. Until I went to uni really. So I came out when I was seventeen, went to uni at nineteen and then found myself really. So, I just thought, I'm just shopping for me I can buy what I want. So then I got more confidence in just going into boys shops and going oh I'll buy that. So I think those years at uni were my best years for getting to know who I was.

P – Yeah.

L – I think for most students!

P – And you're in an environment

L – Yeah, anything goes.

P – Where it's fine.

L – Yeah.

P – That's good yeah. So these are questions about masculinity and femininity, not necessarily to do with clothing but to do with person traits. So can you describe masculinity?

L – Can I describe masculinity? What I think it is?

P – Mmm.

L – Erm, I think masculinity is anything where there's a sense of power, there's a sense of strength. Erm, I think they are quite masculine traits or masculine qualities. Straight forwardness, logical, that kind of thing hits with masculinity. Yeah I can't really think, it's hard to describe isn't it.

P – Yeah! Do you think that you're masculine at all?

L – Erm. I think I am in appearance, like short hair, not really bothered about clothes and shoes which some people assign to mostly women which isn't true with metro sexuality in men nowadays! So not true! But you know, back in the day in the seventies when I was growing up or whatever, it was like, I never really fitted in to that kind of mould. Erm, authoritarian, you could put down to masculinity. I think I struggle with listening to men in power, very much so being a feminist! And I think authority in general I struggle with, so in some ways it's like I fight against that, but then portray it a little bit in the way I am and the way I look. I'm not making myself clear.

P – No I understand

L – Do you know what I'm saying?

P – So you don't like it but you feel like you're almost in a way mimicking it?

L – Yeah. You kind of mimic it and you try to change it from the inside and it's like well, you know we've got a glass ceiling and I want to smash that buggar! But the only way you get there is by using the masculine traits, which are seen as unfeminine or whatever and are given negative connotations. Err, I forgot the question sorry.

P – I was just asking you if you are masculine.

L – Yeah I think I am looks wise and some attitudes yeah.

P – How would you describe femininity?

L – See everything that comes into mind are all negative connotations! (Laughs)

P – That's fine you can say it!

L – Well it's funny because my girlfriend's fem. Erm! Just soft, gentile, polite kind of stuff. Clothing wise, floaty, spangley and bit flashy! (Laughs)

P – So you said these are negative. Do you see femininity as quite a negative thing? For you maybe I don't know.

L – For me, so, no you see I don't. I mean my Mum is extremely feminine and she's wonderful! She's a fantastic Mum and all of that and she's loving, she's kind, she's generous, but I've got all those traits as well from my Mum which I see as feminine traits. But she's very girly my Mum, I just don't get her style. I love femininity and I appreciate it in somebody else, it's just not my style. Do I see it as a weakness sometimes? Yes, but that's only because of how femininity and masculinity are portrayed.

P – Do you think they're still relevant in the time that we're living in?

L – Yeah sadly. You've still got gendered toys. You've still got people saying Daddy's little girl and lock up your daughters and that's for little boys clothing. Whereas I wanted to buy it for our daughter for a laugh! Lock up your daughters! (Laughs) I wasn't allowed. But you know, why is that more offensive on a little girl than it is on a little boy? Sexualised at the age of two.

P – It's the same thing isn't it.

L – It's the same thing. Yeah, we've got a long way to go.

P – Erm, so in terms of gender, you obviously, sort of recognise and thinking about the difference between masculinity and femininity and how you identify gender. Obviously you identify as a woman, but then on a scale of kind of gender where would you put yourself?

L – Well this is it. Oh we have a scale! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs) Where would you put yourself?! So not thinking about masculinity and femininity but thinking about your gender.

L – Yeah sure! Ok. Well that's hilarious. Barbie or G.I Joe! Oh my god, I'd probably go an eight.

P – Right up here?

L – Yeah, not quite G.I. Joe! But yeah, quite high really.

P – And I can see that you totally present yourself in that way don't you, you communicate your identity through your clothing. But it's really interesting that you consider yourself to be a very feminine person, which you are.

L – Hmm.

P – Yeah. Which is really interesting.

L – But to the outer world I'm butch. I hate it! I'd hate it when, like I hate the word butch dyke! I fucking hate it! Really hate it, excuse my swearing. Because I think

P – Do people say that to you?

L – Oh I've had it yeah!

P – But you're not butch.

L – Oh I know right! And that's a negative connotation of butch. And it's like, boyishly cute I'll live with, butch is just harsh! And it's like, I've got friends of mine who are like hard core G.I. Joe butch! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

L – And they're such lovely, lovely women and it's like, and they've reclaimed it, they've completely reclaimed it and I struggle with that word. My girlfriend will say it to me sometimes taking the piss, and I'll be like don't use that word.

P – So they like it, they're all over it.

L – They're fine with it, they've embraced it. I think because I've had too negative comments, negative just horrible stuff said and I can't reclaim that word, I can't reclaim that. So it's quite interesting how different people cope with it.

P – Isn't there a middle ground?

L – Boyishly cute, I'll take that! Butch just makes me feel like an older lesbian which at forty two I don't feel that old yet. (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

L – Could be that when I'm seventy! So it's quite ageist as well I think.

P – Oh do you think?

L – Yeah a little bit.

P – Do you think erm, sort of being comfortable in yourself and comfortable in what you've decided to be in terms of your clothing? Do you think that's an age thing that you're happy with your lot?

L – I think so. I'm just confident, I'm not bothered what people think. Apart from if they're going to use a rude word, but even then it's like

P – Has that come to you with age or has it come to you

L – It's come to me with age yeah. I was bullied as a kid. Terrible at school, awful time. Just because I was obviously a bit different, but weren't quite sure what then. It's just like I'd literally shrink to get past the bullies to get to the shop for the milk for my Mum, and I was thinking don't notice me, don't notice me. I think that comes across in my clothing, don't notice me you know. So I know I still carry that a little bit, but on the gay scene no. Anywhere! I'm not bothered, no not now. I just feel confident.

P – Do you feel sort of erm, thinking about clothing, men's clothing covers up. Do you think you're confident if you need to show skin? So like if you need to go swimming or whatever?

L – No I'm fine with that in context. I won't, I wouldn't get changed, I wouldn't go swimming with many people, because I'm still quite shy so like there's very few people. Like a friend of mine said oh bring the baby we'll go swimming together and I was like ugh no. Not because I don't want to take my baby swimming, just because I don't wanna be that naked in front of, nearly naked in front of one of my new friends. It's like I'd probably just do it with my best friend Dan or my family or my partner and that would literally be it. And I know we've got a family do next year with a swimming pool and I'm thinking agh and everybody will be in it so I've just got to suck it up and do it.

P – Because there's no men's version of the swimming costume.

L – No, so that's the most feminine I'll ever be and the most exposed. Yeah, my idea of hell, but I know my daughter will want to go in the pool and Pip's not a great swimmer so, and I'm a good swimmer!

P – Oh right!

L – I love swimming! So it's just like agh! I'm just going to have to suck it up and get on with it.

P – Do you actually do swimming for exercise or anything?

L – Yes I used to swim, well I was swimming every morning before work but since we've had the baby not so much.

P – (Laughs) Ok erm, so these photos that I've got on here which I'll show you in a minute. They're from a pilot that I did.

L – Ok

P – I did photography and I exhibited it and I asked questions and it's to do with masculinity and femininity in clothing and in people. Ok so there's four images and I just want you to tell me if you think the garments are made for a male or a female body? Off the body to start with.

L – It looks a bit female but I think only from the collar but I’m not a hundred percent sure.

P – Because of the shape?

L – Yeah. The shape of the collar looks a bit odd unless it’s the angle of the thing, like it’s not pointing down. I’d have gone on a girl’s one, but I’m not sure.

P - Because the collar has thrown you out a bit?

L – Yeah.

P – Ok.

L – Looks like boys.

P – Why?

L – The button on the pocket.

P – So the details will give you an idea of.

L – Yeah.

P – Yeah.

L – Looks quite masculine.

P – Ok.

L – (Laughs) I can see Bob in that one! Gay mate, but I’d go feminine. Women’s. I’m probably completely wrong on all of these.

P – (Laughs) Sorry, why did you think the pink one? What was it about it?

L – Label looked a bit girly actually.

P – Oh yeah.

L - And also the cut maybe, for showing a bit of boobage.

P – Ok.

L - And obviously pink. Erm, I think that is probably girl’s because the fly’s quite high and it’s not buttoned.

P – Yeah a few people have said that! And it’s really interesting that, that amount of detail you would notice!

ML – (Laughs)

P – Yeah its women’s anyway. Ok, so looking at these with the models in the clothing.

L – Yeah.

P - Can you tell me which one you think is the most feminine?

L – The girl with the lovely long blonde hair! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs) Do you actually think that or is that just the first one you went to because that’s what we look for?

L – I think because she’s a bit bustier and she’s got more of a womanly figure, she carries it off as feminine.

P – Right.

L – The girl on the left.

P – Right ok.

L – I think if you've got an androgynous body, most of your clothes are going to look androgynous.

P – Yeah. What about this one?

L – So was that a girl's shirt?

P – No it's a guy's shirt actually.

L – A guy's shirt. The collar threw me.

P – It is weird that collar.

L – That is a weird collar.

P – It's a dress shirt.

L – Oh is it!

P – Yeah, so it's got like the four cuff link holes. It's enormous!

L – That is massive isn't it?!

P – Yeah!

L – That must be a size extra, extra large men's.

P – It's huge! So do you think that one of them is more masculine or feminine?

L – It's difficult.

P – Is it different to the other one?

L – Yeah.

P – Why?

L – Because it's hiding their shapes.

P – Ok.

L – So actually they're equally as masculine I'd say.

P – Right ok.

L – It's about the shape isn't it.

P – Alright. So do you think that you say like, you say that wearing menswear is your style, my style is different to your style. So do you think that when you embody the clothing when you wear the clothing, do you think that you're bringing something of yourself to it? So like if I put your clothing on, if I was the same size as you, would I look different in your clothing?

L – You'd probably look cooler in it! (Laughs) It's like you've got a cool edge to you and I ain't got that! It's like!

P – (Laughs) What I mean is like it's your style and sort of owning it, in a way that is difficult to explain, but do you think that different people can wear the same clothing like here.

L – Yeah.

P – But have somebody

L – Yeah I think so, she's owning that style on the left. She's owning it on the right? Probably not as confidently? But I don't know they're both stood in the same kind of situation and same position. See a lot of my friends wear similar clothing to me, especially my older butch friends and it's like, we all carry it with the same kind of style or swagger or something. And it's quite distinctive to lesbians of that kind

of. You can tell somebody who wears boy's clothes but it's not about sexual identity or gender it's just about style

P – Yeah so that's a huge difference?

L - That's a huge difference. So mine's more about just this is who I am. Not really about what I wear, but it helps.

P – So are there any friends in your group that are lesbians that are doing, wearing it for fashion as well? Is it quite a split?

L – All my mates are in their forties, I don't think they care.

P – Oh don't they care.

L – Erm, I'm trying to think.

P - I'm in my forties! I care!

L – Are you!? Yeah see I forget you're in your forties! You don't look it! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

L – You do care, but you're in that industry as well.

P – Yeah it's my thing.

L - I'm a social worker, I'm dealing with safeguarding and things I don't give a toss what I'm wearing! But I've never cared so I've never really been bothered. But, erm, trying to think of my mates. Yeah, one of my mates, she's a lovely girl. She's just graduated and she's got like really funky glasses and like is clearly dykey but cool dykey.

P – Yeah, so she's sort of constructed it a little bit and made herself a look.

L – Yes, definitely, but that looks really good with it and like is obviously following trends or whatever.

P – Yeah, so that's slightly different to the way you're dressing?

L – Yeah, yeah I think so. I think you're either into it or you're not.

P - So in answer to my question. Do you think that people do kind of wear things differently even though, they might be the same size? With, you know sort of enforcing their personality onto something?

L – Yeah, I think so, yeah. Like one of my mates always wears hats. I've got loads of hats, but I haven't the confidence to wear them, which is really annoying, really nice trilby's. I keep buying them but I don't wear them, so maybe erm. Yeah but she'll buy them and she'll wear them because she's got the confidence to wear a hat, but it's the same hat same style but she's got the confidence for it.

P – Yeah

L – I should do it. I should get my trilby out.



### **Participant profile. NEV.**

[www.niamhmcarr.com](http://www.niamhmcarr.com). I-and-Me. Nigel Cabourn. Christopher Raeburn. Black Horse Lane Ateliers. Endrime. ULLAC. Too Good. Acne Studios. Weekday. Topman. Dickies.

***'I do like to now say oh actually my waist isn't that big, I'll wear the skinny thing and have a shape, but not a typical like Barbie doll but it's like my own version and it probably is with some baggy clothes on rather than tight'.***

**Blue. Brown. Navy. Grey. Jeans. Jackets. Boxy. Baggy. Layers. Shapes. Structure. Clown shoes. Workwear. Gender – in the middle or a six. I'm not colourful whatsoever. Daft socks. It's just chopped**

**down. I just think it's funny. I don't wanna look like everyone else. Stripes. Covered. Nothing very feminine. Age 21.**

NEV is a final year Fashion Design Technology student specialising in menswear and her knowledge in this area gives her a perception of menswear as better quality. She feels that with menswear and specifically the vintage workwear jacket that she is wearing that 'it's not going to go anywhere any time soon and you can fix it' (NEV). She is passionate about the quality and durability of menswear, both in design and as clothing for herself.

Shape and structure are key to NEV's thinking in terms of design and of her own clothing choices in terms of menswear. 'It's anything that's like a weird shape...', '...like all my collection is about shapes and how they look on someone. So it's like that for me as well' (NEV). For NEV her menswear items are '...more like casual menswear' (NEV) and also '...men's like suit trousers' (NEV). With men's trousers she finds that she has to buy a large size get them over her hips and so they '...are obviously really high waisted' (NEV) which she likes because 'I still don't like things tight around my stomach...but again if they're higher, it's like that's on a smaller bit...' (NEV). NEV is skilful in her use of clothing to accentuate or play down aspects of her body, such as with trousers where 'I've pulled them up so there's more of my ankle, because again that's a skinnier point' (NEV) and how she points out that, 'if you're cut off at a weird wide point, it's like you're wide that whole way up' (NEV).

NEV finds humour in the way in which she dresses, often in connection with proportional play such as 'I can't hide how big my feet are, so like if I wear Docs I'll wear big chunky three hole ones with yellow laces. Like they're going to look like clown shoes, so they may as well really look like clown shoes! (Laughs)' (NEV). Also when she wears an XXL men's hoodie and 'I just think it looks quite comical and I enjoy that. Rather than looking normal like everyone else does! (Laughs)' (NEV). Oversized clothing was also noted by NEV as offering comfort, in the sense of ease of wear and of internal ease, when '...you're kind of wrapped up in something.' (NEV).



## Nev interview transcription.

P – Alright! So these are all your pictures, so you can click thorough here. So yeah just tell me about what you're wearing!

N – That one is a, I wanna say double XL, triple XL men's t-shirt I think from H&M and my little drug dealer bag! (Laughs)

P – Oh yeah I couldn't see that!

N – The jeans are women's cause I can't get, if I want skinny jeans I'm not gonna get my arse in men's jeans! Just physically that's not going to happen! (Laughs) Erm and Doc Martens sandals. And that I think I was just going to town with one of my friends I don't think we were doing anything.

P – So do you do that a lot? Like massive top skinny bottoms?

N – Yeah. Like when I was really big that was how I kind of compensated. Like not matter what it was I had a big jazzy shirt on or like for a while I only wore stuff I'd made on top. So massive dresses and then skinny tight bottoms, because that to me it made it look like it was ok! (Laughs) Like put it back in proportion! It probably didn't but that was my way.

P – So you don't so much now then because today you've got a smaller top on under there. You've got a smaller top on haven't you?

N – Yeah I never would have worn something tight, three years ago, two and a half years ago, because I was just so much bigger! I think it has changed a bit but I'm skinnier there so.

P – Do you think kind of has it made it more fun dressing like now or is it different in any way?

N – I still wear whatever I would want to wear but I don't have huge big consuming dresses, like not even dresses they were just like really huge t-shirts that were just all like, and I hid anything! From my knees upwards! So I still wear a lot of baggy layers and stuff but it's I'm not as worried if you can see my middle. (Laughs) Kind of thing!

P – Yeah ok.

N – See like there! That's like a major thing that I would wear. I bought them from work so they're like men's like suit trousers.

P – They're really nice.

N – But they're like elastic at the back so I can get them over me and then sit on my waist, rather than. Because that's the thing with me because obviously I do menswear it's not like whether you are male, it's the shape like women are a different shape. You can't physically get some things on men that you can get on women! That's the difference! So for me like you can put menswear on women, it's not an issue it will just go over, but again you can't put square trousers on someone with hips. There's just like a physical difference, but it's not!

P – If you wanted to wear them they'd be like here wouldn't they?

N – Yeah and that's not a good look! (Laughs)

P – So where do you work? Where are the trousers from?

N – Topman. So that's a bit grim working in that kind of fashiony!

P – Does that bother you?

N – A bit, because of what I want to do.

P – Yeah because are you looking more at like ethical fashion?

N – Kind of Yeah.

P – Its difficult you get sucked in though don't you and you've accidentally bought these trousers!

N – I know! I'm not against it, like it's got its place it's always going to have its place, it just needs to be done well. And that's fine. I just hate it when people come in and they're like some lads get a bit pissed off when they see girls working there they're like what can you tell me. I'm like are you kidding me?

P – Really? Oh right.

N – Yeah some of them are still quite rude! And they have like, what do you call it like lace shirts and they're like oh am I in the women's section now? And I end up being told off for being rude! Just when lads say stuff like that I'm just like are you kidding me? Like it's just clothes, that's what it is. Like it's just a piece of clothing, it's not like that's female. I don't see anything like that. Like fair enough now I've got a skirt on, but it's not like that's a women's skirt. Like I won't go into a shop and just go into the women's section or just the men's. It's just a big shop. (Laughs) Like it's not! I don't see the difference, just different shapes.

P – So what is it about the men's shapes that you like better?

N – Just boxy. I still don't like things tight around my stomach, cause that's still not, like I don't feel that comfortable about that. But again if they're higher, it's like that's on a smaller bit and then a tight top is above that so again it's not on like a bigger bit. Like I've got this on but you can't see all of that! Because it's baggier kind of thing and again I've got a tight top on underneath a baggy top, short top, but baggy and boxy so you can't see any of that.

P – So kind of like the boxyness of this top half.

N – And again that's like menswear.

P – Do you think that kind of? So that's menswear is it?

N – Yeah it's just chopped down yeah.

P – So the scale here, do you think that's maybe making you look smaller there?

N – Yeah because I used to do that as in like have such big top half things, just to make because it would make my bottom half look skinnier and I always like the proportion of it.

P – Do you like messing with that like proportions?

N – Yeah! (Laughs) Definitely, because that's just what I like doing. Like I've got big feet anyway for how tall I am. I'm a size six.

P – Yeah!!

N - (Laughs) It's like really big for how tall I am! (Laughs)

P – I'm a six!

N – It's daft isn't! So I always have quite big clumpy shoes. Like I can't hide how big my feet are, so like if I wear Docs I'll wear big chunky three hole ones with yellow laces. Like they're going to look like clown shoes, so they may as well really look like clown shoes! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) Yeah! So talking about kind of balancing clothing or like messing with scale. Can you tell me a bit more about how you do that? Sort of with volume and scale and sizes and stuff.

N – So like with that, I wouldn't wear, because they're tapered. They're going in at the bottom so I've pulled them up so there's more of my ankle, because again that's a skinnier point. If you're cut off at a weird wide point, it's like you're wide that whole way up. So again, putting it at your waist or like a slightly smaller point. It's like sleeves, that I'm surprised I'll wear them that short because my arms are quite big. Only in like the last 8 months I've started wearing vests and stuff because I've kind of gone, my arms have always been big, I'm the skinniest I've ever been, they're never going to be much skinner than now! They're always going to be reasonably sized arms! Like my thighs are big, they're never going to be that skinny. So it's like well just get on with it!

P – Make the most of it, because this is the best it's going to be. (Laughs)

N – Yeah! (Laughs) Like I'm not all of a sudden going to look like really slim teeny tiny petite arms! I might as well get over it and actually wear a top that cuts off there.

P – But that looks, that looks fine! And it's just how you're comfortable isn't it. So is that the same outfit? Different shoes?

N – Yeah.

P – What's the jacket you've got on?

N – It's just this workwear jacket, a big square one.

P – Is that vintage?

N – Yeah it's just a men's. (Laughs)

P – They're great aren't they?

N – I love them. (Laughs) I think I stole this one off Chloe actually! (Laughs) She had two and I was just like oh I'll have that one thank you!

P – Do you go to like kilo sales and stuff like that or how do you?

N – I used to rework vintage clothing and sell it, so I was always in big wholesale places like with it all stacked up in big bales and stuff. I used to pretty much only wear vintage stuff, but again it was when I was bigger and it was massive men's shirts and stuff like that. I think again since being, since losing weight I can buy clothes that are in shops.

P – Yeah because you wouldn't have been able to buy from Topshop and stuff would you.

N – So it's, I've kind of, I do compared to then, I now have more newer clothes, but I still have some bits and bobs of vintage because I was surrounded by it in my sewing room all day! (Laughs)

P – I love vintage. I kind of get a bit shocked by prices when I have to buy real clothes.

N – Yeah! (Laughs)

P – I really liked this one!

N – (Laughs)

P – So what size is that?!

N – Triple XL.

P – And where is it from?

N – I think it's from Topman, yeah Topman as well because that's Nick's. I think we both ended up buying one because I think I bought it on my uniform because I put on a massive hoodie in work and then he was oh I want one so we've both got the same pink hoodie. There's one double XL and one triple XL! (Laughs) I think that's the triple because it's so low down.

P – Right ok. What have you got on with it?

N – Jeans, like a 501 style but I chopped them off. I think it's just vintage jeans again but chopped off into shorts.

P – So what is it about that absolutely huge hoodie? Like why did you wear it that day? Tell me sort of the reasons for that.

N – I think that was just around the house or just like doing bits and bobs, not particularly going anywhere, because I'd be a bit funny about having that bit of my legs out completely.

P – I thought that from what you'd just said. Yeah from what you just said I thought that's quite a lot of leg!

N – Yeah. It's just because I was in the house all day. I probably wouldn't go out in shorts like that unless it was red hot and I was just like ugh!

P – You obviously wear the hoodie though because you bought it for work? So like why is it so massive? Do you just like it that way? What's the reason?

N – Yeah just comfy, because that's the biggest thing I couldn't not be comfortable ever.

P – But don't you think you'd be comfortable in a large?

N – Yeah! (Laughs)

P – So why do you like the volume and the length of things? Can you think about that?

N – I don't know if it's because I'm small, and I was small and big so it's like just like you said about playing with proportions of things. Whether I just think it looks quite comical and I enjoy that. Rather than looking normal like everyone else does! (Laughs)

P – So what do you feel like in it?

N – I think it's fun!

P – You think it's fun?

N – Yeah.

P – And you said comfortable didn't you?

N – That's the biggest point of that one especially! (Laughs)

P – So the sleeves must be really long. Do you roll them up or do you just let them?

N – Yeah I just think I cuff them a bit, roll them up so there's a big thing here but yeah just move them up a bit.

P – Do you kind of enjoy that feeling of kind of like bigness? So like if it's too big?

N – Yeah I do like when something is, you're kind of wrapped up in something. Was it Yohji Yamamoto, said you wrap women in the clothing not to hide them but to like protect them. Like stunning they are! I'm just loving women in Japanese culture and stuff so I kind of I just enjoy it and it just feels nice around me. Not hiding anymore I don't think, it's more just because it's comfortable.

P – Because it's nice. So like today you've got that jacket over, is that a vest top you've got underneath?

N – It's a little like halter neck.

P – So will you keep your jacket on all day? Or would you take it off?

N – Depends where I am. In the studio I'd probably take it off, but like yesterday I had a little top on like this as well and I was doing that shoot in London. I was wearing this jacket and I didn't take it off all day. Just because I was like will my arms look massive compared to everyone else here, because they're all like Londoners and vegan you know. (Laughs) I just kept it on all day.

P – It's something to aim for being a Londoner and a vegan. (Laughs) Ok what are these?

N – That was yesterday so I had Dickies work trousers on, which again are obviously really high waisted because they're men's so to get them over.

P – So are they like a larger size to get over your hips?

N – Yeah I think they're a thirty-four and those trousers from Topman are a thirty-four as well because they wouldn't have gone over my hips otherwise. I know my waist isn't a thirty-four inch but, once you've got them on it's completely different.

P – So they're quite like gathered around your waist are they with a belt or something?

N – Yeah. They're a bit tight on my hips, not tight but they fit on my hips.

P – So would you wear them. You've got that on?

N – Yeah.

P – And you've got a short top on?

N – Yeah.

P – So if you were in a different situation where you felt more at home and you weren't with loads of vegan Londoners, would you take your jacket off?

N – (Laughs) Yeah. Because with that as well if I had them trousers on in uni, I'd probably happily wear a massive top over it, because I'm not bothered if someone in uni thinks I'm that wide. I know I'm not that wide! (Laughs) It's like again, depending where you are, because I think to me, going down and doing an internship with like all these people and working with fancy-ish people or whatever. I know what people will think if someone thinks you're that wide.

P – Yeah. So did you deliberately wear the small top.

N – Yeah, because it's like actually no I'm not that wide by the way! I'm that wide!

P – So did you have it like this open?

N – Yeah or I might just have had the top one done, but pretty much yeah.

P – So you're obviously consciously thinking about occasion and what works for you. So, if, do you, I mean it's difficult because of how we work you don't really need to be smart do you?! But if, have you ever been in a situation where you had to be smart?

N – Yeah I think I sent you some where I've got a big white shirt on. That's my like go-to if I've got an actual interview or something. Like placement, I wore that for interviews that were more formal kind of things rather than. If I'm meeting someone that's got a brand that is the kind of thing I want to do, like she knows I'm going to wear jeans because it's about denim. But going for an interview at like Craghoppers I obviously wasn't going to, so I pitch up in the big white shirt. I think it's weekday so they're pretty much unisex, I don't know if they do gendered things more now, but it's just a big white shirt it's not fitted it's not anything but it's just a massive white shirt! (Laughs)

P – So say you were going to a wedding, what would you wear then?

N – Erm.

P – Like a family wedding?

N – Right so for the show the other day our final year show, I had a denim dress on, but it wasn't erm it was just a boxy square thing. So it's not particularly tight or anything because I wouldn't. I don't feel comfortable if something's all over tight on me it's just I can't! (Laughs)

P – Did you feel alright with that? Did you feel ok, comfortable?

N – Yeah I just had that and dark sandals on. It was quite me, so. (Laughs)

P – So do you ever. Say if you were going to a wedding what would you wear?

N – Probably something like that just a boxy dress.

P – A boxy dress.

N – Yeah.

P – So you wouldn't just be like, all the rules that normally apply to me, I'm not going to do that!

N – I wouldn't go in like a pair of Dickies trousers it's just not appropriate. I don't want to kind of be purposefully like, well I don't wear pink dresses so I'm just going to wear like dirty work trousers! I wouldn't, I'm not an arse about it! (Laughs) But I always look like me, even if I've got a dress on. It's

still my type of thing it is just boxy, I'm not going to all of a sudden have a bodycon dress on because that's what other people are going to wear. If I was going to wear a skirt it would be like this like big or like levis jeans made into a skirt, I've got a couple of them.

P – It's quite casual as well. Do you, oh! I've forgotten what I was going to say! Ok.

N – Yeah that's. That skirt I found the other day because it's been red hot hasn't it! And I found it and again it got too small for me, it's a silk one from Jaeger so it's like really old. So I found it the other day and again I thought I can wear this again, I'm not huge anymore I'm not. And that's my Acne jacket that I bought in Copenhagen. It's my pride and joy! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs)

N – I bought it from the archive, so they have like sample pieces so like I know they've put the pockets on wrong! I just like it, because it's a one off.

P – Yeah! It's great! So that's what you've got on now.

N – Yeah pretty much. Which is again baffling that I've actually worn something that looks a bit!

P – Is it too big the skirt?

N – It's Yeah.

P – Did you buy it too big?

N – No it was when I was big.

P – Right.

N – Actually I've got a lot of pictures from before when I was big and I've got like this on and it's like pulled! Like it is tight on me and now I've got to like fold it over and put a belt on it, so it's just massive.

P - It obviously looks totally different on you and the way that you're styling it as well, because it's bigger and you're folding it over and putting the belt on. So do you like the way it looks now?

N – Yeah.

P – The way that it kind of puffs out doesn't it and looks nice.

N – It's anything that's like a weird shape, I think, I like that. It's like thick, like real denim. I like when they stand on their own.

P – I does its own thing.

N – Yeah.

P – So when you're shopping, what kind of fabrics are you looking for? Do you look for fabrics in particular?

N – Yeah, everything I do obviously design wise as well, I don't design anything until I've picked fabrics, because being in uni I'm not going to compromise. I hate it when you hear someone say I've designed this and I can't find the fabric! Great! (Laughs) What are you going to do! (Laughs)

P – That's not how it works, you don't do that anyway.

N – Yeah so fabric is. Now I'm very much like how much cotton has it got in it, stuff like that and denim obviously is what I want to do. I just love everything denim! (Laughs) All that area of heavy cottons and stuff.

P – So is that what you look for as well in your clothes?

N – Yeah!

P – Obviously not everything! But you like that kind of like heavy fabric?

N – Yeah.

P – Do you think that's what you like about menswear?

N – Yeah, because it's just more quality. Just like this little top, it's not going to I mean come on, it's not going to withstand anything! It is what it is, it's hot outside I just want a little stretchy top on and it's not about it being an amazing quality vest top because it's not going to feel like that is it! With me going for menswear it's like this I don't know how old it is, it's probably not that old it's been overlooked and stuff. It's not going to go anywhere any time soon and you can fix it.

P – No you'll have that forever.

N – Yeah. It can, if it's cottons and denims and stuff like that you can sew stuff back together, you can patch it up. If something like that silk skirt, I was sat on the bus I thought I'm just going to rip this! I'll just get it caught on a nail or something on the bus because you can't do anything about it! (Laughs) So even though I might like it, I'm a bit like well that's a bit annoying. With dresses and stuff I'd probably wear a denim dress or cotton like this it's just like poplin.

P – Do you feel quite feminine still in the clothing that you wear? Do you feel feminine in some of the bigger clothing?

N – I don't think I feel feminine. I think sometimes I feel a bit odd if I'm with all my friends and everyone is like really like stunning and quite girly and I'm the odd one out that looks like a boy at the end. That, I always feel a bit like the fat one at the end that they've brought along! (Laughs) Compared to everyone else who's in like really nice dresses and whatever, it's like I can't even wear heels either I can't do it, so I do just look like the short fat one on the end. So that's always a bit, I get a bit not upset about it but just why can't I wear something more girly.

P – That's your height and your shape, that's nothing to do with sort of femininity I suppose. So you say you don't feel feminine, do you not sort of get the concept or?

N – If I were to put, say I was to put like a denim skirt on I might be like oh this is a bit girlier. I might feel like cuter. Think I ever think I look that feminine or I don't feel more girly I don't think. I know I might look girly some days is I've got a skirt on or a dress on, but I don't think I act any different. I don't know what that might mean because I haven't been brought up to be like this is the girls things these are boys things. I was wearing combat trousers as a kid and I didn't have boys or girls clothes like I wore boys shorts to school and stuff like that, there was no difference in clothing. My Mum and Dad put me in whatever patchwork hippie trousers and waistcoats and stuff it's not been a thing for me. I've not been brought up to be like this is what girls do, I don't think I get that.

P – Do you think masculinity and femininity as concepts are still relevant?

N – To some people yeah and to some cultures yeah, but not much to me.

P – Do you think you're masculine?

N – I think I'm quite tomboy-ish, and I'm going to say boys because it's like a lad not necessarily like a grown man. (Laughs) Like my voice it's not, I don't have like a really high pitched like nice voice, I've got like not a deep voice but whether that's just coming from Yorkshire and I have that kind of accent. As well I don't, nothing's ever particularly nice and girly, so I am just a bit boy-ish I think and like the way I walk. \*\*\*\* will like laugh at me, he'll be like I can hear you! I don't do anything particularly delicately! (Laughs) And like sewing as well. My first year tutors were like how are you so small and so heavy handed, as was like I'm not surprised I'm doing denim! Because it, I'm just quite heavy handed with things! (Laughs)

P – So do you think that the way you feel about yourself and femininity do you think that's reflected in the way that you dress?

N – Yeah, because I don't feel comfortable in something that you might typically say oh we'll put this on you to make you look feminine. Like if I went into personal shopping at work and I said make me look more feminine and girly, I would not feel comfortable in what they put me in at all. It's just not very me! (Laughs)

P – So what do you think are things that are feminine? Sort of clothing at you would avoid.

N – Like dresses that are tight the whole way up, like bodycon dresses and it's like stretchy and it's completely on you. Like we have House of CB at work in Topshop and it's like completely elastic, this dress is made of elastic and I could not think of anything worse than being wrapped in hot sweaty polyester and going and standing in Tiger Tiger. I could not think of anything worse! It's just that kind of tight, wrapped up.

P – So tightness you're associating with it?

N – Yeah.

P – What about details?

N – I don't mind stuff being flowery and stuff, but I wouldn't particularly wear that.

P – Yeah everything I've seen on there has been quite like muted.

N - (Laughs)

P – Well like muted colours like dark colours as well. (Laughs)

N – But my house is completely different. Yeah people kind of laughed when I moved and they come round because my living room looks like a bird aviary, I just love fake birds I just think they're hilarious! So everything's very flowery and colourful! (Laughs)

P – But that's kind of like a vintage look isn't it! Have you got plants everywhere?

N – Yeah. But I'm not colourful whatsoever. Like brown or navy is probably the most bright you're going to get, but I'll wear daft coloured socks. I just think it's funny and again I just enjoy that.

P – Do you think that erm, sort of talking about femininity and the way that you feel about dressing in a very feminine way? Do you think that the way that you dress is sort of an illustration of your gender identity?

N - (Laughs) Sorry!

P – So for instance on this funny little scale I've made, where do you think you would fit?

N – Probably in the middle or a six. I don't think I'm completely wearing like, I wouldn't wear like a man's three piece suit and just have done with it. I do like to now say oh actually my waist isn't that big, I'll wear the skinny thing and have a shape, but not a typical like Barbie doll but it's like my own version and it probably is with some baggy clothes on rather than tight.

P – Do you think that the way you dress as well is to do with it being your thing? Like this is the way I dress and like are you trying to be different or are you just not really thinking about it like that?

N – I've always dressed differently since being a kid, so it's just kind of stuck with me. When I was like a teenager I think I tried to be more like everyone else for a bit and it just wasn't very me. But even then I kind of ended up like having dyed hair and it was different, and then I ended up with dreads and it was different and I kind of got out of it then and just wore whatever I wanted to wear! (Laughs)

P – Do you sort of consciously look for clothing that is different?

N – Yeah because I don't wanna look like everyone else. When you're a student you don't have much money, but I've got my uniform allowance so it's great! I bought my dress for the show and like a secretly got it given me on my uniform even though it was boutique. It were like you're not supposed to have that and I was like no one will have this! It is really nice it's got like a slit here and it's boxy. It's very me with sleeves, again like covering my arms and then someone else at the show had it on and I was oh gutted! I was like why! (Laughs) I though oh no one will have it!

P – The one time! Ok what's this one?

N – That's my big three hole Docs like clown shoes, skinny jeans again, my Acne jacket and it's a white shirt. Like a boxy white shirt I think it's from Zara, with a men's striped top on that's cut down. It should



have been undone to be honest! It because this shirt is a bit see through, so I put the stripy top on underneath it.

P – Oh and you see the stripes through it.

N – Yeah.

P - Cool. So is that a men's or a women's coat?

N – It's Acne so it's not.

P – Oh it's not either, yeah.

N – Especially because it's just a sample piece, it's just something random that they had in the archive! (Laughs) So yeah it's not really anything.

P – How come they let you buy it? I thought they'd want to save all that stuff?

N – They sell like their show pieces in there. So if they have like a one off thing that goes down the catwalk at that end they might sell that in there if they want to, or like random shoes that they've got left. Like they sell all sorts.

P – Right that sounds exciting!

N – Like stock piled jeans just piled up that they haven't either shipped anywhere or whatever.

P – That sounds really good.

N – It's amazing! Because \*\*\*\* wanted to buy some shoes, so normally over here because he's an eleven probably going to get shoes in weird places. As soon as you go over to Scandinavia and Denmark everyone's got massive feet so there was no chance he was going to get an eleven because that's like a popular size! So he didn't end up getting any shoes!

P – So this one looks like less clothing here, is that like a smaller jacket? What have you got on there?

N – It's a men's black shirt from when I was doing some waitressing at a wedding, tucked into jeans and it was in a hotel so I basically got in trouble for like, you've got jeans on. I was like I promise you, if I wore trousers it's not a good look, this is much better I promise you. They were like it's not formal enough and I was like no seriously like I look smarter because I look better. I really hate that when you see something really ill-fitting and it looks crap on someone, even if it might be more formal what's the point? Because they don't look good in a way I might as well have like, they weren't like washed out black or anything, they were like black skinny jeans that actually like looked alright rather than ugly like school trousers. I tucked the shirt in so I was a bit smarter! (Laughs)

P – So is that what you were going to do then? You were going to do the waitressing?

N – Yeah that's what that was for.

P – Right ok. So did you only buy the shirt it do that?

N – Yeah, I would wear a buttoned up shirt and a tie at any other point in my life! (Laughs) Yeah that's my Acne jacket again and some wide leg gingham trousers, I've got a stripy top on as well.

P – You have yeah. So the trousers and top women's?

N – The top won't be, it's that striped one. The trousers yeah they're the pyjama ones I got.

P – That's quite wild for you. (Laughs)

N - (Laughs) That shirt is so funny and that jacket. I saw on it one of \*\*\*\*'s friends \*\*\*\*\*, he had it and I was like that's incredible though. It's from H&M!

P – The jacket?

N – Yeah. It's a completely beaded jacket I was like that well nice and he had it on with a stripy top it looked so nice on him! That was from the women's section in H&M and I saw it on \*\*\*\*\* and really liked it, so I don't know if that's interesting?!

P – Yeah!

N – But I saw it on him but it happened to be women's.

P – But yeah because it could look completely different. I mean like on you it looks cool because you kind of like because of the way you are, but if it was on a really dressy woman it would look totally different.

N – It's not shaped or anything, it is completely square. So if it was a dressy woman she might not be that keen on it because it is quite baggy and wide and like the sleeves are wide as well, so it's not particularly tight or anything and it would look not that formal.

P – I love that! I really like the picture! Because it's got all the framing in it, it's good!

N – That's in the Britannia hotel in Liverpool. It was an experience it's so bad. That's just that massive Weekday shirt. That's my Nan's birthday, so that's me looking formal for my Nan because she's always like why do you dress like you do? Why won't you wear like girls clothes? Why don't you look more like a girl? She still says it to me now and I'm twenty one. She'd always try and buy me stuff when I was little and try and get it on me and I wouldn't wear it and my Mum would be like, leave her she's not going to wear it just because you've bought it kind of thing. So that was my trying to appease my Nan on her seventieth, by wearing something slightly more formal! (Laughs) But it is just, it's huge! I think that's a small as well from Weekday and it's about this wide. It's enormous, it's amazing.

P – I love it yeah. It makes a really good shape when you're standing there.

N – That's the thing, I love shapes and like all my collection is about shapes and how they look on someone. So it's like that for me as well.

P – So do you think that obviously, different body's make clothing look different, so it's not going to look the same on everybody.

N – Everything I wear, if you put it on Ella it would look so much cooler. (Laughs) Because she's got a really tiny waist and everything can sit over her, but stuff gets stuck on me. It might get stuck on my stomach or stuck on my hips. So it's like how I would want things to look like perfectly it would probably be on Chloe, but like actually I might have to wear it a bit bigger so it sits over me again.

P – So does it bother you that you like? So was this kind of what you expected to see on your scan?

N – My thighs are huge! Like they are big for how, it's just because of how small I am I think!

P – Yeah.

N – If you look at me you might think I would be quite petit because I'm only five-two. I'm not that big, I'm not a big human, it's not like I've got wide shoulders or anything! But I am like chunky, whatever! Again, it's the skinniest I've ever been so it's fine! (Laughs)

P – So does it bother you? Do your hips bother you? Like do you have to compensate for them?

N – Yeah I will try and find stuff that sits over them, or if it's skinny jeans I wouldn't wear skinny jeans and a little top like this, because you're going to see all the front bit that's just not great! So like them Dickies trousers, even though they're high waisted on me as well, they sit over all the bit's that I don't particularly want to see.

P – So if you're wearing those Dickies trousers and they're a bit tight or you've got a belt on. Do you feel comfortable in them?

N – I do but if I was to sit down I'd pull my jacket over me like this. I wouldn't, it is a constant thing of not, I don't ever want to seem like I'm oblivious to it. That's what bothers me because I don't want people to go, oh she's so fat and she doesn't even know it! The thing of being laughed at for that and not knowing, that really kind of bothers me! So it's just I'll just cover it up then it doesn't matter.

P – So what is it about clothing fit, like the way that an item fits that makes you like it?

N – Just if it looks nice, as long as it's comfy and it looks how I want it to look, yeah. Just because it looked nice, I wouldn't wear something uncomfortable, or if it wasn't particularly me I wouldn't wear it if it wasn't my style. I think if I was to go and put like a body con dress on, it's kind of like who are you kidding? And again like its other people looking at me and going, who is she kidding? It's not, like you're not going to look nice, why would you wear that why would you try and look like that? You're not going to look good in that.

P – Oh we've done them, ok! So erm, let me just check through these. I've got some images from a study that I did and I just want you to look at them and tell me if you think that they're made for a male or a female body.

N – Ok.

P – And tell me why as well.

N – That I'd say men's, just because. Has it got a hanging loop? They tend to put stuff like that. Is that a little hanging loop? It's that think where they don't think women need stuff like that! (Laughs) I'd say men's, also because of the sleeve, cuffs are wide.

P – So like you're looking at the details there aren't you really? Would you pick those out as being quite masculine details?

N – Yeah as in what people put on menswear typically, classic menswear. Like tailoring is different but. It's like which way buttons go on, like I refuse to do any of that and like anything I make my tutors like why is that on that side? It's your menswear? And I was like I literally haven't even thought about it I've just put button holes on either side, I was like it makes no difference. I was like just because. We don't have people dressing us anymore! When we had like, if you were a king and someone was dressing you I totally understand that it would be more helpful for something to be going on the other way like its fine I get that. But nowadays it's like all my collection, things button up the opposite way and the jeans go any way. I don't get why it matters! (Laughs)

P – So do you still think that like collars and cuffs, do you still think that they're seen as being quite like a masculine clothing detail?

N – I think some people think yeah. Again put like some on women, because we've got shorter necks or whatever, like if something's quite stiff and big you're going to look like little and hunched kind of thing! (Laughs) So stuff like that I think some people still put into men's and women's, because in the end the body shapes are different, but it doesn't actually make a difference! (Laughs)

P – Because obviously like a men's shirt like this one, it's really stiff and I quite like it because of that. So like would you aim for that kind of really sort of masculine detail in clothing? Or are you looking more for the shapes?

N – For me personally?

P – Yeah.

N – It's the shapes, because I don't particularly wear much tailoring type stuff, so it never really come to me but it's like if that, like a stiff collar I'd be a bit like it's a bit annoying. So it's more like casual menswear I like than tailored menswear.

P – And you're kind of going a lot for comfort as well?

N – Yeah. (Laughs)

P – Ok, this one?

N – Again I'd say menswear because they look vintage and they've got like that kind of pocket, a jetted pocket. Again, probably wouldn't put things like that on women's because if a girl's got a bigger bum things might hang open, so that put different types of pockets on women's that might not. Well I might

be wrong! Erm, probably men's again because the neck's so deep and if it's. I don't know because like nineties then it might, women would wear bigger? Oh I don't know! (Laughs)

P – Its men's actually. I just chopped it off and dyed it pink!

N – I'm going to say women's.

P – What makes you say that?

N – The pockets don't look that big and because they're like stretchy.

P – Yeah. So do you think that's a thing on women's clothes that they're less, they don't have pockets and space?

N – Yeah. For me they have less things on them. So like those suit trousers, them Topman pinstripe trousers that I had on them tapered ones. The pockets on the bum, because I've got a bum you can see the pocket bag, because it's pulled whereas on a man you wouldn't see that because they don't have an arse like pushing against the fabric! (Laughs) Whereas I do! So I don't know whether it's stuff like that in womenswear that there's less on it. If something's tight, it's a bit grim if you put so much stuff underneath and you can see all these pocket bags and stitches and stuff.

P – Yeah I suppose practically wise, but does that put you off women's? Are you ever put off women's because of that?

N – I do find it annoying when there's not pockets or there's not hanging loops and stuff. What's the difference? Again I don't see a difference. Like this stuff you've shown me, that vest, I didn't, it's not about something being pink or something being black. That, none of that matters to me, I don't, I literally don't naturally think of it. I think because I've been brought up not wearing anything particular from either I'll just wear whatever. Like as a baby everyone thought I was a boy because I had like jet black hair and I was wearing like little hippie onesies and stuff. I didn't look like a boy or a girl typically. That to me doesn't go oh it's definitely a girls because it's pink.

P – So do you think those stereotypes do exist for some people then?

N – Yeah it's not, I don't think we can kid ourselves thinking it's gone away because it hasn't, but when my parents had me in the nineties it didn't matter to them.

P – Do you think, it seems to be because of the environment you've been brought up in?

N – Yeah.

P – That, you know you don't really have those preconceptions about things as much.

N – Yeah because since I've got older it's not bothered me to the point where I'm now making menswear, but it's the shape of menswear for me it isn't I'm not just dressing boys, that's not what it is. Like I shot my collection on both, it's just clothing.

P – So on these, can you tell me of either of those looks more feminine?

N – I don't know maybe. The thing is I just thought oh people might think her because she's got long blonde hair, but again I don't, I had to think that! I wouldn't actually know if she's more feminine! (Laughs) It is the thing of like short hair, because like in my dissertation I said about that everyone seems to think I'm gay.

P – Really?!

N – Yeah!

P – I wouldn't have thought that at all.

N – Well, this made it into my dissertation because everyone says it to me and everyone says it to my Mum, but like I'm not surprised with my Mum because she does act like butch. But my Mum will do stuff on purpose, like she'll purposefully not wear a skirt in a certain situation. That I can't be arsed with she's like obnoxious about it and like will purposefully not say she's got a boyfriend for ages and people

think. Like I'm not about that. But the bit that was in my dissertation was someone said to me oh I thought you were gay till you told me you lived with your boyfriend and I was like what? Why? They were like just the way you dress and how you act, but this person is transgender. So she was a boy and she said this to me and I was like (Laughs) what?!! (Laughs) I was like this is bizarre! I understand kind of when people say it to me, I was like right whatever, but for her to say it to me I was like baffled!

P – Yeah! So do you think that people think that about you a lot?

N – Like everyone, like when I'm with my friends I accept that I always feel like the short fat one and it's like they brought the little butch lesbian along. You know like in Bridesmaids, Mellissa McCarthy?

P – Yeah!

N – It's like I'm that one!

P – Is that because of the way you dress or because of your body shape or your hair or what is it?

N - I think it's all, kind of all of it because I am shorter, I am a bit wider whatever! I don't what word people use, like thicker?! (Laughs)

P - (Laughs) I don't think it's that one!

N - (Laughs) Whatever people's word they're going to use! Then again, I don't wear heels I've never worn, like my first pair of shoes were a pair of converse. I've never worn anything with heels. My feet are probably very messed up because of it, but because I walk like. I walk like I've always worn flat shoes! I don't walk particularly delicately! (Laughs) So everything's quite clunky and heavy handed, just how I talk can be quite loud and I've got a deep-ish voice sometimes and stuff like that so! (Laughs) So some people think I'm gay because of this!

P – Right!

N – And the fact that someone transgender?! She's transgender and has a boyfriend, so she's straight transgender, straight female. I always have to like work it out. So for her to say that to me I was like baffled, because she's a girl with a boyfriend but she used to be a boy.

P – So do you think you can still make those kinds of assumptions about people?

N – I don't. Like some people are very camp. Like my friend Laura's camp, she's a straight girl but she is really camp in the way of just how she talks and whatever but people think if you're camp you're. If you said what's camp, you'd use a flamboyant boy to describe that wouldn't you, but it's not really a thing anymore. I think you can, people can still get that, oh like that woman might be a lesbian because she's got this or he might look like a homosexual male because he's got this on but what?! (Laughs)

P – So did you say anything about these I can't remember?

N – I kind of had to say that I thought people would think that she was more feminine, (Laughs) because she's got long blonde hair!

P – So what about the way that they're embodying the clothes. Do you think that one person looks better in them than the other?

N – She's got slightly bigger boobs so it comes up a bit more, but again I don't know what?! (Laughs)

P – What about?

N – Sorry this is not very useful!

P – No you're alright. Can you say if one of them looks more feminine on there?

N – Erm, no not really because it's nothing, they're both wearing a kind of clowny type outfit with a tie on and shirt.

P – What do you think about personal style and the way that people wear clothes? Such as we're wearing quite different stuff. So do you think that certain people can carry off clothes in a different way to others?

N – Erm yeah I think if you have a certain type of personality, like my friend Tom he can wear two pairs of denim shorts layered on top of one another in Vivienne Westwood crocodile skin, you know the big wooden shoe and a what do you call it like a string vest an come into uni. He also had a Vivienne Westwood dust bag on as a hat one day, like he'd pulled it over his head and like this was an outfit and I was like it looks fine! But I couldn't like, the thought of me trying to, I couldn't do it like I couldn't wear something like that because it's just like carrying it.

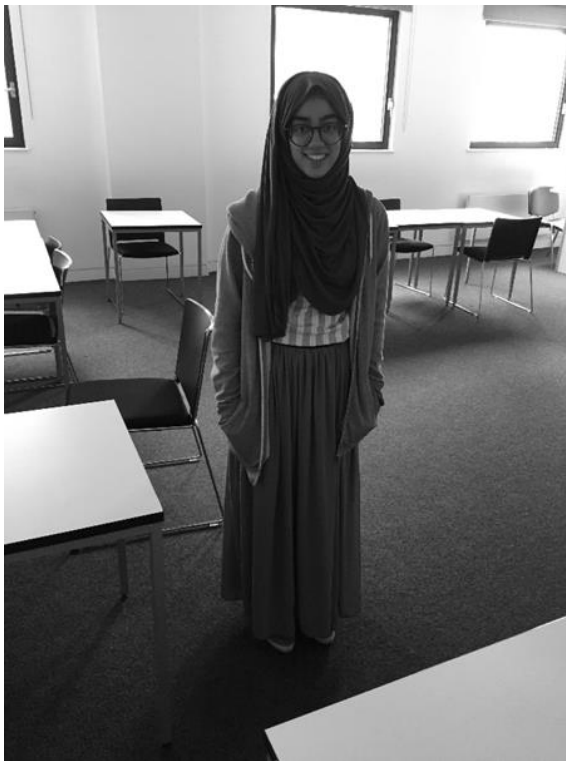
P – What do you think makes him able to do that then?

N – Just how he is, it's not even like being more or less confident I don't think that's it, because I don't think if I was just more confident I'd wear that! It's not, it's not like confident means you can wear something like that! Confident in what you want to wear and he wants to wear that and I think he's prepared to do it so.

P – So do you think there is that sort of an element where certain people just kind of suit certain things?

N – Yeah because like I said about me thinking other people thinking of me like who are you kidding? There's stuff like that. Some people because of how I act I don't think I'd swan into the Union in a bodycon dress and ballet pumps (Laughs), because it's not very me! It's not how I would dress, not how I act. So yeah.

P – I think that's it.



#### **Participant profile. NOELLE.**

H&M. Forever 21. Primark.

*'... I just feel more feminine when I wear female clothes, as a pose to feeling less feminine when I wear men's clothes if that makes sense. I don't feel feminine or masculine when I wear men's clothes, it's just a thing like now. I've just got so used to it, it's just something that I wear it's not a big deal. It's more of a big deal to me when I just wear a dress or something or like a skirt or something'.*

**Palazzo trousers, Muslim women and dressing on YouTube. Comfort. Modesty. Subtle. Floaty fabrics. Colour in summer. Boyfriend jeans. Gender scale 4-6. Upsizing.**

NOELLE is an architecture student at MMU, she wears men's clothes for modesty because she is Muslim; the styles and larger sizes work well for this. 'So yeah, I think that's why I go to the men's section because they have cheaper clothes which are actually bigger so it just turns out to become modest clothing' (NOELLE). The wearing of menswear is mainly '...the top half...' (NOELLE), as this is the area which she wants to cover well with a larger size. NOELLE voices her dislike for women's tops due to the prints being '...a bit tacky or lame! ... Whereas men's clothes it's always a bit more toned down, a bit more subtle which I prefer' (NOELLE). She doesn't seem to wear men's clothing as a gender statement, but rather as an act of practicality, for example when asked about wearing men's shirts NOELLE replied with 'I think I find it a little bit difficult to style because they're put in a way that it looks like it would be a

man that would wear it... I can't picture myself wearing it!' (NOELLE). Practicality however is noted as important, as menswear offers modesty.

Noelle enjoys many aspects of women's clothing, such as '...flowy material...' (NOELLE), because she finds '...it makes you feel quite elegant. Yeah it's quite modest and it drapes nicely as well' (NOELLE). She finds that in summer 'when I start bringing out colours, I think I just tend to transition more into feminine clothes' (NOELLE). However, NOELLE selected a neutral 4-6 on the gender scale, laughing with 'I'm just looking at the Barbie and I'm like! (Laughs) I can't! But obviously I don't fit there' (NOELLE). She finds women's clothing impractical at times, especially when they are modest as these items are floaty, long and 'difficult to navigate' (NOELLE), thus NOELLE will restrict her wearing of these styles to dry days, and non-studio days.

A usual style for NOELLE is '...mix and match...' (NOELLE), with 'like bottom half feminine, like loose trousers or a skirt with the top half like a man's t-shirt or a jumper or something. I think it works quite nicely, because I love loose' (NOELLE). She values comfort expressing how '...ever since I discovered boyfriend jeans I stopped wearing skinny jeans because they were just not comfortable for me anymore! (Laughs)' (NOELLE).

## Noelle interview transcription.

P – Ok, so I've got here your, all the images that you posted, so I'm just going to slide this over. So if you just want to tell me what you were wearing. Kind of discuss why and what you were doing, what your day was. That kind of thing.

N – Ok, so I shall start?

P – Yeah!

N – Ok. I'm actually wearing that t-shirt today! (Laughs) So, that was, most of the time I'm just going to uni so I dress quite casually, because you know we're an art school and it's quite erm dynamic I guess you could say. So I was wearing erm, palazzo trousers which were, yeah they're female trousers. The only men's piece of clothing in there are the t-shirt and the jacket, which is actually quite nice because it's quite big and loose. So like the hood is quite big so it fits over this massive bun! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

N – So the reason I wear all this clothing is because I'm Muslim. So in our religion and in a lot of other religions as well it does say to dress modestly and these days obviously female clothing isn't quite modest, though these days there are a few modest clothing that's coming out. I was walking past H&M the other day and there's a lot of modest clothing coming out, but unfortunately it's still quite expensive. So yeah, I think that's why I go to the men's section because they have cheaper clothes which are actually bigger so it just turns out to become modest clothing. Generally most of the time I just tend to buy essentials from men's clothing. So t-shirts, maybe jackets and stuff or jumpers as well, because that's generally what I want in a bigger size because it's normally the top half so I just tend to cover that I need a bigger size. So yeah! I don't know what else to say! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs) Ok that's fine! You can flick through.

N – Erm, this one yeah like I said, if I like it I'll buy it and I was in the men's section and I saw that that jumper and I liked it so I bought it! (Laughs) I'm not going to lie! It's quite a short jumper though so I wouldn't really wear it with trousers, so that's why I tucked it into a skirt. Erm, I like to mix and match. Like bottom half feminine, like loose trousers or a skirt with the top half like a man's t-shirt or a jumper or something. I think it works quite nicely, because I love loose, so yeah. This one! Oh yeah, it's just the t-shirt that's men's and the rest of it is all female. I'm just wearing a jumper underneath it's a female jumper, it's actually a really tight jumper. So it's quite a body con jumper, so I just had to wear something on top to keep it quite modest. I just thought it worked quite well to be honest!

P – Did you buy the jumper to wear it under things?

N – No I bought the jumper because I liked it but then I wore it and it just turned out to be a bit tight, so erm yeah I just thought I'd wear it underneath things. I normally wear it in the winter just as layering, so yeah.

P – Would that be too tight for you to wear buy itself then?

N – Yeah. It's just the sleeves. I really like the sleeves because they go like over your hands and stuff. It's just really nice and the pattern.

P – So you said about that before, about sleeves going over your hands.

N – Yeah.

P – Why is that?

N – I don't know! It gives off a cosy feeling or something! I think girls like it when things go over their hands, like this one. It just feels nice I think! Yeah, it's just like a comfort thing.

P – Ok

Yeah. Oh this one. Both the jumper and the trousers are actually men's

P – Are they jeans?

N – They're jeans yeah, the jeans are men's as well. They're actually skinny men's jeans, but obviously they're a bit looser on me. And erm, you can't really tell on the picture but I rolled up the jeans so that they sat just above my ankle. Then the jumper again, I saw it I loved it so I just bought it. And it fits really nicely because it's just like a straight jumper so it fits you know, very modest. Yeah, I was quite surprised about the jeans actually because I don't normally buy men's trousers but I think these were probably a small, so erm, they fit quite nice.

P – What kind of waist have they got? Like a low waist or?

N – I think so yeah.

P – Do you wear jeans very often?

N – Sometimes yeah, normally in the summer.

P – Do you wear skinny jeans with a big top? Or do you go for more baggy jeans.

N – Erm, ever since I discovered boyfriend jeans I stopped wearing skinny jeans because they were just not comfortable for me anymore! (Laughs) Because after wearing boyfriend jeans they're just so uncomfortable because they're so loose! So I don't wear skinny jeans any more, but I'd normally wear boyfriend jeans or straight leg jeans if I was to wear anything. If I'm to wear a really long top then I'll probably wear like smart trousers or erm, even just loose trousers because sometimes it does work quite well. But I don't normally wear jeans, like skinny jeans with large tops, that's just a personal preference.

P – Ok! This one?

N – Ah yeah, so the jumper is actually I think my brother's jumper! My brother's old jumper and then obviously the jacket is men's as well.

P – Where is the jacket from?

N – The jacket's from H&M actually. It was on sale, it's really nice, it's really big and erm I don't actually have a proper rain coat so it's a good alternative even though it get wet really easily! (Laughs) But erm, yeah and the trousers are just women's smart trousers.

P – They're quite baggy though.

N – Yeah palazzos, really nice. The material's is quite nice because it's really flowy.



P – Does the material, erm. Is that a thing for you so are you ok with the flowing material on your bottom half?

N – Yeah, yeah.

P – So if it was top half sort of shirts, would you feel the same about that?

N – What do you mean like flowy material?

P – Yeah.

N – Yeah yeah, I think like flowy material anyway is nice, because it makes you feel quite elegant. Yeah it's quite modest and it drapes nicely as well

P – Some things, I've heard people say you know that sometimes if you've got something flowy on the top when you walk it kind of like sticks to you. Do you ever think about that kind of thing?

N – Erm, not really because I think my scarf covers the top half, so I think it's alright yeah.

P – Do you change the colour of your scarf to match your outfit?

N – Yeah I do I do, it's just quite nice isn't it?! (Laughs)

P – It is! It's like another accessory!

N – Yeah I think that's.

P – Today you've got the same outfit on anyway?

N – Well similar outfit, it's different.

P – What have you got on?

N – I've got a skirt on today. So yeah, we were talking about the flowy material it's quite nice.

P – Yeah.

N – Quite nice and yeah the jacket is also a men's jacket from Forever 21.

P – Its still quite a slouchy outfit isn't it?

N – Yeah,

P – Its quite casual isn't it.

N – Very casual!

P – So thinking about occasion, so you said you're coming into college, it's a casual environment anyway.

N – Yeah.

P – So what if you were going to a different occasion? Can you tell me about that?

N – Right, most of the time it's like a cultural event, so I'd normally wear cultural clothes which are modest anyway. So I'd wear shalwar kameez or like loose tops, like they're normally quite baggy. Yeah like south Indian or Indian clothing, that's normally what I'd wear.

P – So erm, I guess if you're going to a wedding I guess it would be the same sort of thing?

N – Yeah.

P – What if you were going to a smart event that wasn't sort of a family event?

N – Right, I think I'd probably wear like, I'd probably wear all female clothes actually because normally when I buy men's clothes it's only casual. Like t-shirts and stuff so I'd probably wear like a skirt like this with a shirt tucked in and a blazer on top. So yeah.

P – Ok, so you're saying that when you wear men's clothing it's to feel more casual?

N – I guess yeah, because well I obviously wouldn't buy, at least I don't think so! I wouldn't buy men's smart clothes at the moment because from what I can think I don't really think it would look good because it's for men. Things like blazers and trousers and things like that, obviously it's all men's clothes and you can find decent smart clothes for women which aren't you know, immodest. Erm, sorry what was the question?!

P – I was just asking sort of when you would buy men's and when you'd buy women's. So are you saying that when you want to be smarter

N – I guess! I've never really thought about it like that! It's not something that's a conscious decision.

P – Yeah.

N – But now I think about it all the men's clothes I have are, apart from the jumpers actually, the jumpers I do buy are normally smart clothes but at the same time I'd wear it in a casual way.

P – Yeah.

N – I could if I wanted to I guess if I tucked it into smart trousers with a blazer on top, but yeah most of the time I just keep it really casual.

P – Ok. So when you're looking for a masculine garment, well do you look for masculine garments? Or is it just what catches your eye that it happens to be men's?

N – I think erm, when I was younger I kind of just took my brothers clothes and stuff!

P – Yeah

N – Then I started going into the men's section and because the female section a lot of the time doesn't have a lot for me to browse through, I just tend to go in the men's section.

P – I suppose yeah, if you're thinking about high street, a lot of it is quite revealing and that's no good is it. So erm, what kind of. Are you looking for shapes or colours when you're shopping?

N - Erm Well, just a few days ago I was in Primark and I wanted a basic white t-shirt and it was so hard to find one for females! (Laughs) Because t-shirts normally are quite tight, but they also have things on the front. They have like logo's or whatever text or something! It's just so difficult to find! Then I went to the customer services and that's in the men's section and I noticed this plain white t-shirt and it's massive and it's long! And I was just like, I need that!

P – (Laughs)

N – So, if I need something and it's like a basic or an essentials I guess I could try and find it in the men's section because it's quite hard in the female's section.

P – Yeah, so you're saying that the women's stuff, more of it has things on. I suppose that does apply for men in that they've got prints and things like that.

N – Yeah.

P – So what do you associate more with women's clothes than men's? Characteristics wise.

N – Right, I think females clothes are a lot more out there. It's a lot more like things on the front the logos or the writing and sometimes it's the colours and stuff, they're a lot more garish. Like men's clothes are a lot more toned down and subtle. The logos and the things on the front, they seem cooler! (Laughs) I suppose the female's clothes just seem a bit tacky or lame! Just a bit like err? Yeah I think females clothes are just a bit, it's a bit tacky or cheap sometimes. Whereas men's clothes it's always a bit more toned down, a bit more subtle which I prefer.

P – Mmm, Ok. So you seem to prefer form looking at the photographs, you seem to prefer those more toned down colours. Is that what you'd normally go for?

N – I think in winter I normally do but then in summer I start bringing out the colours and stuff. When I start bringing out colours, I think I just tend to transition more into feminine clothes. You know, it was

really hot just a few weeks ago and I was wearing a lot more dresses stuff like that so yeah, it also depends on seasonal as well.

P – Ok, so a few weeks ago you were wearing what kind of like, what kind of dresses where you wearing?

N – Like really long shirts just like flowy dresses, skirts like these erm, yeah it was a lot more feminine clothes.

P – And more colour you said?

N – Yeah definitely more colour, because I think female clothes also tend to have a lot more colour as well. Bright colours and things, which can work in your favour if you wanted to!

P – Yeah. Do you think people notice that you wear men's clothes?

N – No definitely not. Erm, yeah people, like that hoodie, I've got a lot of compliments on it. Then when I tell people it's men's they get quite shocked, so yeah.

P – Do you erm, do you notice other people wearing men's clothing?

N – No not really.

P – You can't really tell?

N – No.

P – Do you think you style yourself differently when you wear men's clothing? Do you wear much make-up?

N – No, I don't really wear make-up.

P – Not at all ever or just?

N – No just skincare, that's it. I don't do make-up.

P – Ok. So is there any sort of different styling you would do if you were wearing men's clothing?

N – I think like we said before, I just feel a lot more casual. A lot less dressed up, that's definitely what it is. Like when I'm wearing dresses and stuff I feel a lot more dressed up. Even if it's just a simple basic just a long shirt with nothing on it, I just feel a lot more dressed up. I think that's the main difference, just how you feel. Like if I'm wearing that I just feel very low key very, I just want to blend in.

P – So yeah. So the kind of menswear that you're wearing is more kind of like t-shirts, jumpers, hoodies. Whereas sort of in the context of menswear you could be wearing a shirt, which quite a lot of people do wear men's shirts. A kind of where you sit with it is very casual.

N – Yeah definitely.

P – Are there any particular characteristics of clothing that you can think of? So if you think of masculine clothing, what is it that's masculine about it?

N – I think the clothes, it's ironic really because I think men's clothing these days it actually, the t-shirts are a lot longer now, I've noticed that's a trend, so it's quite funny because that doesn't tend to seem or come across as very masculine. I mean long clothing, yeah I think that, but erm also a lot of muscle fit tee's are coming out now so that's obviously a lot bigger. I think that just larger clothes tend to be more towards men. If that makes sense? Erm, masculine clothing? I don't know, I don't know what else. It's a lot less fitted and then like I said before the colours, just a lot less bright more muted.

P – So you said about the muscle fit t-shirts, have you erm. I was going to say, they fit, they're kind of narrower across the shoulders aren't they.

N – I mean I've not actually bought one yet!(laughs) I've yet to actually buy one to see what it's like. From what I noticed there was a lot of muscle fit tee's but erm, I've not actually bought one myself. But I did see that there were a lot longer t-shirts.

P – Yeah. So would you ever wear like a man's shirt?

N – Like a shirt? I did have one actually. Actually ironically it was very bright and very, the pattern was quite out there. I used to, like I used to wear that with jeans and stuff. So erm, yeah I would wear men's shirts I just don't tend to buy them that often, because they're a bit more high end perhaps. Yeah and I think, I think I find it a little bit difficult to style because they're put in a way that it looks like it would be a man that would wear it. It's just, you know when you see it in the shop it's quite like. I don't know how to explain it! But you wouldn't, I can't picture myself wearing it?! But then if I see someone else wearing a man's shirt I'd be like oh yeah I could wear it like that but I guess I just don't tend to buy them so.

P – Yeah.

N – I could! Yeah I would be open to buying one because they are quite loose. They would be nice as like a cover up.

P – Do you always buy new? Do you every buy from like charity shops or vintage?

N – I think personally I hate shopping! So seeing all those racks of clothes! It's just daunting! It's just very daunting. I really want to go vintage shopping I just don't have the patience for it! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs) Erm, ok. So erm, some questions about your body. Do you dress, erm, do you think your clothing choice is influenced by your body? Sort of the shape of your body?

N – Not really, I just wear anything that's loose on me. I tend to buy larger sizes so. I think technically I supposed to be like a ten or something, but I normally tend to buy a twelve or a fourteen, maybe higher. Erm, so yeah I'll just try and buy something that's larger than the size that I am.

P – Is that typical of Muslim women? Or just you?

N – I think if you're trying to buy modest clothing yeah generally. Because there's a few YouTuber's and stuff who are Muslim women and yeah they'll tend to say oh yeah I bought this in a size larger than I am. So yeah I'd say yeah.

P – Erm, remind me at the end because I saw a lecture the other day that would be good for you and I'll point you in the right direction.

N – Oh (Laughs)

P – Do you think that clothing choice can make your body look different?

N – What do you mean by that?

P – Ok so if you want to accentuate a particular part of your body or if you want to miss out a part of your body. I suppose that what you're doing with the modest clothing is kind of like missing out sort of the curves of your body? Is that what you're doing?

N – I guess yeah, but having said that I think when you tuck like a t-shirt into a skirt it kind of accentuates your waist a bit. So I guess sometimes you would throw on just like a shirt or something or a jacket to cover up.

P – Yeah

N – But, yeah I guess.

P – I suppose you don't have a problematic body really do you? You don't have really big hips or anything like that!? My thinking is that some people have like an area that they don't want people to see.

N – Yeah, I guess.

P – But you don't really have that I don't think.

N – Erm, well! I am a bit generous on that side!

P – Are you?!

N – Yeah but obviously you can't tell because I cover it up!

P – Yeah! So these questions are about masculinity and femininity. Not to do with clothing particularly, more to do with what those things are masculinity and femininity ok. The questions are a bit tricky!

N – Ok!

P – Sorry! How would you describe masculinity?

N – Oh god! Oh god! In what way? Like characteristics?

P – Characteristics, traits, like personality traits all those kinds of things.

N – They're more tough, they're more like they tend to show less emotion. They tend to be a bit more on the tough and rough side, bit more like hidden I guess! It's funny because thinking about the clothing what we were discussing about that, it's kind of reflected in the clothing. They're a lot more behind the scenes, they're a bit more muted toned down! That's kind of what I'd associate with masculinity yeah.

P – Ok. Do you think that you're in any way sort of masculine?

N – I think growing up I used to be a bit of a Tom-boy, so I think in the case of showing my emotions I'm not very good at that. I think that's one aspect of it. I'm not very girly, I don't scream a lot I don't. You know like when girls are like freaking out and they're screaming! Oh my god I can't stand that! I really can't stand that! (Laughs) So yeah in some senses I guess yeah!

P – Can you describe femininity?

N – Femininity, very out there very emotional, very kind of in the forefront. When I think of masculinity and femininity, I think masculinity is in the background and femininity is in the foreground if that makes sense? That's because feminist's, feminist's?! Females are very kind of, just they're very emotional they kind of let a lot of things out. They're kind of open I guess you could say. Again, I think that accentuated in the clothes, like flowy garments very kind of open and loose and kind of, yeah I don't know. I'm describing it better with hand actions than I am with words! (Laughs) But yeah! Have I answered the question?

P – (Laughs) So you say you think that's reflected in the clothing? Obviously it's important to you in different ways, but have you noticed that women's clothing shows more skin? Like it's more revealing?

N – Yeah, I think. Sorry what's the question?

P – Just have you noticed that?

N – Yeah, of course! When I'm shopping as someone who is trying to avoid that I notice it a lot. Things like skinny jeans, crop tops, these kinds of things it's quite difficult to. And they're everywhere you know! It's just mass produced and it's cheaper than the modest alternatives, so it's hard to you know find that in females.

P – So how do you feel about that in terms of the comparison between the amount of skin showing on women's wear and on menswear? Can you discuss that? What do you think?

N – I think erm, from a feminist point of view obviously it's not fair all that kind of stuff. It's quite funny that, I don't want to get too political, but yeah it's quite funny that it's considered more feminist to show your skin when it should be that you have the choice to show your skin or not show your skin. You know, that's personally what I think. Yeah I think it's obviously not fair in the sense that why should men get to cover up or they get to have modest clothing. But at the same time I think in a way it's almost equal because men, you know with things like muscle tee's and things it shows the shape of their body anyway so yeah. I think it's on an equal level to be honest, it's just that women have more to show.

P – Ok. Do you feel more or less feminine when you wear male gendered clothing? Does it make any difference to you?

N – I feel less feminine I guess yeah. I think rather than feeling less feminine I just feel more feminine when I wear female clothes, as a pose to feeling less feminine when I wear men's clothes if that makes sense. I don't feel feminine or masculine when I wear men's clothes, it's just a thing like now. I've just got so used to it, it's just something that I wear it's not a big deal. It's more of a big deal to me when I just wear a dress or something or like a skirt or something.

P – Yeah. So when you wear a dress or a skirt and you feel different, you say you feel feminine. So how do you feel that's different?

N – I just feel pretty. I feel a lot more like, I don't know like I feel more summery I guess. That's why it kind of comes out in summer, it feels a lot more like light and airy and refreshing! Because in winter like it's skirts and dresses they're just not practical. So erm, yeah you're just kind of you're just bundled up in coats and jumper sand things so it's just a bit like erm ok! But then in summer it's you know! I don't know it's, it feels summery!

P – But is it. So is it a good thing to feel more feminine when you wear those things?

N – Yeah, yeah I guess! Erm, yeah it just kind of brings out that inner femaleness inside of you I think that every female has. Just wanting to feel pretty to feel you know, elegant and nice in summer. I think it just kind of accentuates that.

P – Ok. So when you wear men's clothing and you don't have that sort of femininity. Is it more like, erm. What is the difference?

N – It just feels like I'm wearing just normal clothes. It doesn't feel different. I just feel more casual or like practical! I don't know it that's to do with the fact that it is men's clothing, but yeah it just feels a lot more like straight forward I guess you could say. The way I'm describing it makes it sound like I'm describing masculinity and femininity which is quite ironic! (Laughs) But yeah just, yeah it feels quite just normal.

P – So when you were at uni and you were working and you were in you dress last week. Did you feel more or less able to go about your day?

N – I think when I wear things like skirts and dresses, I make sure that I'm not actually wearing them on days when I need to go into studio, because when you're in studio it's a bit impractical. Normally these days I'm working in the library so it's just a lot more sitting down with your laptop work so. I'll kind of time, not time but I will wear you know, flowy or things that I know might get a bit in the way on days when I'm not moving around too much and I'm just kind of sitting down doing work.

P – Ok, so in terms of practicality then, how do you feel about women's clothing in general?

N – If it's modest it does get a bit difficult, especially if it's floor length like skirts and stuff they're a bit difficult to navigate. If it's just like above floor length, so like knee length or below or something it's fine, but I think it's normally just skirts which get a bit in the way. Maybe long shirts as well, but long shirts not normally, skirts and dresses generally. I wore a lot of palazzo trousers in these photos because they're the alternative to skirts, the practical alternative to skirts for me. Which is why I tend to wear them a lot in winter, because they don't touch the floor, but they also offer me the modesty that I need. So that's why I tend to wear those a lot.

P – Yeah ok. So we were talking about masculinity and femininity. So to do with women that wear men's clothing, I wanted you to think about your gender identity and where you think you fit on a [scale](#). So I've made this little scale. Which number do you think you might be?

N – Is this to do with clothing?

P – No this is your gender identity, so how you feel inside.

N – Interesting. I'd say it would also depend on the seasons. I guess at the moment I'd place on a four to five! Four point five.

P – Just thinking about what you were saying about you can't stand it when girls are like screaming. So like these are the kind of things, sort of like where you feel you sit. So you're not sort of a very feminine person?

N – No, no, but at the same time I don't identify with that, so it's kind of like. I guess four to six maybe.

P – Why do you think you'd put yourself there?

N – I don't know really I guess, I'm just looking at the Barbie and I'm like! (Laughs) I can't! But obviously I don't fit there, so I guess more of a middling ground is nice.

P – So thinking about gender identity and the world that we live in now and obviously a gender spectrum, people can fit all along there. So do you think that sort of masculinity and femininity still have a place?

N – I think yeah because traditionally it's always been there and it's always going to be there in a sense. So I think it's kind of, obviously there is the whole gender spectrum thing but you can't take out the things which were originally there if that makes sense? They were the original! They're the one to ten on the spectrum I guess you could say, so you can't take out one and ten and just leave the rest behind! Yeah I think they will always have a place if that makes sense, because there's always going to be people who want to be more masculine and there's always going to be people who want to be more feminine and you can't take that away from them. So yeah there will be I think.

P – Ok. Have you always dressed in a, have you always dressed using boy's clothes as well when you were younger?

N – I started I think when I was about fifteen when I started to wear modest clothing because before that I used to wear things like skinny jeans and short tops and things like that. But then I think, because my friends and I we started to tell each other oh we should dress more modestly and things like that so. I think it was just by chance that I had my brother's jumper, because I needed it for school. So I think it started from then and I realised how much I liked it and I just started buying more men's clothing. My Mum found it so weird initially! Because we were shopping for my Dad and my brother and I'm like, I like that, and my Mum was like no! (Laughs) But erm, yeah I think it just started from then when I was about fifteen, just all by chance.

P – Yeah.

N – Yeah, just went on from there.

P – So, I've got erm. I did a pilot study with some clothing, thinking about masculinity and femininity in clothing but also thinking about perceptions of clothing on and off the body. So the first four images, I just want you to look at them and tell me if you think they were made for a male or a female body.

N – Ok.

P – This is the first one.

N – I'd say, can I say both?

P – Yeah, I want you to explain your answer, so just tell me what you think.

N – Right, erm I'd say both because I can't imagine a standard male wearing that (Laughs) Like in terms of when we were talking about masculinity and stuff, I can't imagine like most males I know wearing that because of the colours, it's quite bright. I think the one thing that makes it seem masculine is the tie, but I don't think that should be restricted to males or females and I can see a female wearing that because of the colours. Like I said the tie shouldn't restrict anything in terms of gender. So that's why I can see both wearing it. It's just, I'm going to say female I guess because I can't see a man wearing that. (Laughs)

P – Do you not see guys wearing coloured shirts?

N – Not a lot! I guess maybe, from the guys that I know, generally speaking they wouldn't wear something like that but I guess especially in an art school with people wearing all different types of clothes, I could see someone wearing that. But generally speaking, no in general I can't see males wearing that. Even though I guess it is a male shirt right?! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs) Yeah it is! So the guys that you know are people from uni and stuff like that?

N – Yeah they definitely would not wear something like that! Are they trousers?

P – Yeah.

N – Males I guess because of the way the pocket looks and the button, it looks like male trousers. It looks like something my Dad would wear!

P – (Laughs) Yeah they are men's.

N – Erm, I was going to say female initially because of the colour, but the cut of the top makes it look male. At the same time, I can't really tell the scale of it but it looks a bit small. So maybe like a small male's I guess yeah.

P – Yeah it is.

N – Those jeans oh! I'd say male because it looks a bit big, but I can see females wearing that. Yeah male's.

P – Do you think it's hard to tell when the garments are not on a person?

N – Yeah I guess. Like on initial reaction, like yeah it is a bit hard to tell but when you start looking at it a bit more closely you can tell why it is a certain gender.

P – So what is it you're picking out? Were you able to say what this one was?

N – Male.

P – Ok, those are female jeans. So what did you think made them look male?

N – Oh erm, the waistline I think but erm I guess it could be a big size as well. And I guess yeah like you said you can't really tell because it's not on a person. I think initially because I thought they were quite big, but I think it's just a larger female size. So that's why.

P – Erm, and this one? So what was it about it that you said?

N – Immediately because of the colour I just thought female in my head, but then on closer inspection the cut of it, the cut of the top itself does not look feminine.

P – Ok. The next one. Can you tell me which model looks more feminine to you?

N – I think the one on the right.

P – Can you tell me why?

N – I think the hair and also (Laughs) this isn't anything to do with the models, but the lighting as well is the reason! Because the lighting on this one is a lot brighter.

P – Oh right!

N – Yeah! I know that's not to do with the models themselves, but yeah I think the lighting makes a difference as well!

P – Why?

N – Because the colour seems brighter.

P – Ok.

N – It just seems more like.

P – Yeah, yeah ok!

N – Yeah.

P – That's interesting.



N – And I think it's the hair mainly. And also like her body shape as well kind of accentuates the top in a more feminine way because it curves in slightly, whereas on this model it's a bit more straight.

P – Ok, erm, is it easier to tell which gender the clothing is designed for now that they're on a person?

N – Yeah, if I hadn't seen the initial clothes. Are you talking about if I hadn't seen?

P – No just now, I mean what do you think now?

N – Yeah you'd think they were females, because that top I genuinely thought that was a men's top.

P – It is a men's top.

N – Oh right, right! But it looks, yeah it just looks like a female top.

P – To be fair it was longer, but I cut it off, but they are men's trousers.

N – Interesting.

P – Mmm. So this one. Which model looks more feminine?

N – The one on the left, sorry the one on the right again.

P – Ok.

N – And to be honest there's not much difference. Yeah apart from the hair I guess again, and I think the outfit looks slightly bigger on her. I think that makes it seem a bit more feminine. When clothing seems bigger on a female it just seems a bit more feminine I think.

P – Why is that do you think?

N – I don't know! I really don't know. I don't know, I'm trying to think why but there's no words coming to my head. It's kind of like a girl wearing her boyfriend's clothes I think. That's the kind of image that comes into my head.

P – Right.

N – Yeah, I think the hair just makes a big difference though.

P – Alright. Do you think that erm, when people wear clothes such as looking at these models, even though they're wearing exactly the same clothing, they're standing in exactly the same way. Do you think that they look exactly the same in the clothing, or do you think there's a difference coming through with like personalities or style or anything like that?

N – Like I said the hair makes a difference, maybe the colour of the hair as well I guess! (Laughs) It's not something you can change, but yeah I think the blonde looks more feminine. Like the blonde hair seems more feminine and the cut of her hair doesn't seem as feminine. Yeah, are they the same height? They look?

P – Yeah probably.

N – Yeah because for some reason the clothes do look bigger on the right model.

P – Right.

N – It just seems a bit more feminine like I said before. Yeah I think, like initially when I first saw them I found it really difficult to distinguish who might be more feminine.

P – Yeah.

N – Yeah, but I think if anything it's just the hair that makes a difference.

P – So talking about people's style and kind of being able to wear particular things. Do you think that different people in, say like you put my clothes on and I put yours on? Do you think we would carry it off in the same way or do you think that erm some people can wear things and other people can't? So it suits them in different ways.

N – I think we'd have a very different vibe if we wore it. So I think it depends on your confidence as well. For instance if I was to wear your clothes, I'd feel very different and if I didn't like it and I didn't think it suited me then obviously my confidence would be less when I'm wearing it. So it wouldn't be carried off in the same way. Also our vibes would be, when we're wearing something different, the vibe that we carry is different because it's not the kind of clothing we usually wear. So I think yeah, certain clothes do kind of, are associated with certain people in a sense because. I think everyone has a certain aesthetic and erm, yeah if you're to kind of break away from that. I'm not saying it's weird because you can do it, it just depends on your confidence and how you think you look in it. So it all depends on you really. Yeah I think it would be a bit like, it just depends on how you carry yourself. If you're confident in what you're wearing then people are going to notice and they're going to be able to tell that it would just look a bit weird.

P – So you're talking about saying about how you feel and the way that you feel in the clothing. So do you sometimes wake up on different days and think oh I can't wear that or I can wear that?

N – Yeah definitely! Like sometimes I'll look at the t-shirts the jumpers, like that hoodie the black hoodie? You know I'll look at it, because I wear it so often and I'll be like I don't want to wear that! It's just so drab and it brings down my kind of! And I'm ugh I have to wear that again. Sometimes I like it because it's so big and nice and snug, but other days it just feels a bit oppressive because it's so big and black and just ugh!

P – (Laughs)

N – It covers everything you know! Like it's just annoying! So yeah. Sorry I keep forgetting what the question is!

P – It's ok! I was just asking you about moods. You know like different moods and the kinds of things you'd wear.

N – Yeah definitely like sometimes I feel really girly and I want to wear something feminine, but then weather permitting I tend not to! So if it's raining for example I'll probably not wear a skirt, I'll probably just opt for trousers even though I don't want to. Like a lot of the time as the weather started transitioning, I wanted to wear more like brighter colours and stuff, but it was just raining so then I'd be like ugh! I can't be bothered now! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

N – Because it just brings down your mood doesn't it?!

P – When you're purchasing clothes do you look at fabrics? Like weights of fabrics or?

N – I look at quality of fabrics. For example I used to buy jumpers a lot and t-shirts as well and jacket, this for example. It's an alright fabric but like it bobbles and you can tell very easily when a fabric bobbles, so I'll just avoid that, stay away from it. So quality of fabric, I look at that. Also the weight of it yeah, I will look at that as well, because obviously in the UK it's cold so, you need slightly thicker fabrics but if it's summer I'm looking for something thinner. Like these days my summer wardrobe is quite limited so I'm trying to look for thinner clothes, so I will look for more thinner t-shirts and things like that.

P – What about textures and erm, we discussed colour, but yeah.

N – Texture? I would say if it's a rough texture, yeah I wouldn't really tend to buy it. I don't know, I don't really, it's not really a conscious decision, so trying to recall how you buy things is quite difficult! But texture, I don't think it plays a big part.

P – I think we're done!



### **Participant profile. JESSICA.**

Oi Polloi. Timberland. Converse. Levis. Vintage.

*'I think for me it's more about doing something for my individual shape, size and style and comfort, because to wear something that didn't feel comfortable or that I felt that I was dressing to try to fit in somewhere that's just not what, that's just not what I would do'.*

**Practicality. Comfort. Feeling cool. Second-hand. 80's jumper. Sheepskin jacket. Aztec. Stripes. Cotton. Denim. Chunky jumpers. Big shirts. Skinny jeans. Trainers. Baggy. Hat. Fisherman's jacket. Rucksack. Feeling free. I don't wear bras. Gender scale 5 - somewhere in between. Age 37. Tomboy.**

**Men and women, not masculinity and femininity. No bows or fluffy high collars.**

JESSICA is a criminology lecturer at MMU and her practical style is based on her 'self' and her body in terms of what feels and looks good. On a typical day 'I like to wear leggings a lot, I think that's because of my shape. I like, I do wear jeans as well but I tend to wear erm, I would say female bottom half and then male top half' (JESSICA). This gender mix is reflected in JESSICA's ideas about how 'I feel like my life can be both feminine and masculine at the same time. Even by what I wear every day, that there's a bit of everything and I suppose my temperament as well' (JESSICA).

JESSICA is most concerned '...with being comfortable and covering up. And feeling like I can be free in my body (laughs) to be able to get on with my daily life. I don't think female clothes suit my lifestyle' (JESSICA). Oversized men's clothing offers this sense of space, 'I like to wear big shirts. This is a shirt that my boyfriend donated to me. He donates a lot of clothes to me, which is great. Or I steal them, which he doesn't like so much' (JESSICA).

This desire for freedom extends to JESSICA feeling 'I don't like feeling restricted, I don't like having things that are too tight to my body almost' (JESSICA), such that she no longer wears a bra, finding it '... just so uncomfortable...' (JESSICA). As somebody who walks to work and is seeking ease, 'I think comfort is a massive thing. Erm, and practicality is a massive thing! Because I often find that female clothing sometimes isn't practical or it doesn't keep you... waterproof or you know having something on your shoulders' (JESSICA).

JESSICA finds that she cannot achieve the spacious feeling she gets from a men's shirt in typical womenswear because '...like a woman's shirt tends to be like cinched in at the waist doesn't it and tends to be quite fitted. Whereas I don't feel that looks good or is comfortable for me' (JESSICA). As a tall and verging on 'plus size' (JESSICA) woman, JESSICA rationalises her preference for menswear by considering that '...maybe it's something to do with the fact that I don't feel big in men's clothes' (JESSICA).

## Jessica interview transcription.

P – So the first question is about the images that you sent to me on Facebook...

J – Yeah.

P - ... and also the clothing that you just choose to wear day in day out. So, what have you chosen to wear today?

J – So I have chosen to wear today probably something that is quite typical of what I wear on a day to day basis. So erm, trainers, usually always blokes' trainers I'm a size 7 so, that's quite good because I can err you know go to Oi Polloi. Do you know Oi Polloi?

P – No.

J – So Oi Polloi is like erm, it's like a menswear shop in the Northern Quarter. It quite, it's kind of quite expensive but they do like some sales and they've always got really good sales on trainers and stuff like that. So I always buy trainers from there. So I bought these, which are my new favourites. I think I've had them on...

P – Mint!

J – Yeah, you like that! (Laughing). I'll usually wear things, I usually wear leggings I like to wear leggings a lot, I think that's because of my shape. I like, I do wear jeans as well but I tend to wear erm, I would say female bottom half and then male top half. That tends to be what I do. I like to wear big shirts. This is a shirt that my boyfriend donated to me. He donates a lot of clothes to me, which is great. Or I steal them, which he doesn't like so much. So yeah usually quite kind of dark and yeah big shirts, big jackets, big coats, I like to layer stuff. So erm, so yeah I think that's about it really.

P- So women's bottoms so you said leggings.

J – Leggings, so! Leggings or jeans, I like skinny jeans, tend to wear skinny jeans.

P – So you seem to be choosing narrower bottoms?

J – Yeah.

P – Yeah, bigger tops.

J – Yeah, so like I can't fit into, for example I can't fit into men's jeans because of my hips. So, and I find that with a lot of erm, like I'm not opposed to wearing dresses for special occasions, but they don't suit my body shape, they don't fit me properly. It's got to be something that's quite stretchy, that will kind of fit to my body shape rather than something that's structured, because you know I'm better with a top and a bottom because I'm quite, I'm bottom heavy and therefore you know like, you know like, I'll be like a size 14-16 on the bottom but then maybe a 14 even a 12 sometimes on the top. So a dress doesn't fit me, or you know, so I would choose to kind of, have I suppose yeah, select different styles. Some of my friends will wear like kind of erm... I wear blokes jogging bottoms, that's something I do do, because I find them a lot comfier.

P – You wear them big?

J – Yeah. And then like, I quite like you know just if I'm lounging around, like a tucked in vest with blokes jogging bottoms and you know just like a big pair of socks on or something like that. I just find it comfier. I find that it looks better on me. So yeah it tends to be that my I suppose my outerwear tends to be male as well. So my jackets, my trainers, shirts that kind of thing. I wouldn't wear anything that was erm. I prefer things to be baggy rather than that are you know, like a woman's shirt tends to be like cinched in at the waist doesn't it and tends to be quite fitted. Whereas I don't feel that looks good or is comfortable for me.

P – So what do you think about the shape of women's coats then, to wear with the kind of tops that you're wearing?

J – Yeah, so. But yeah I suppose I just tend to. I’m trying to think what, I’m trying to think. Yeah I do have women’s coats. So yeah, but it tends, I tend not to dress very smartly. I think that’s the thing. And if I was going into a job every day where I had to wear smart clothes, maybe I would wear more female clothing. I don’t know.

P – Yeah,

J – I do think it’s a lot to do with you know, the fact that I can wear what I want when I come into work here.

P – Yeah.

J – And that I don’t have to be smart and if I don’t have to be smart then I’m not. I tend to be casual.

P – There is I think, if you’re wearing really big tops, you can’t fit a women’s coat over that...

J – Yeah.

P – Which I have a problem with.

J – Yeah, yeah, yeah.

P – Erm, so the Facebook images.

J – Yeah.

P – If you could have a look through. (Images shown on laptop). So erm, what I want to know is thinking about choice. Thinking about how you felt in the clothing.

J – Yeah.

P – What the day entailed, so they’re all there if you want to tell me about them.

J – So, yeah again. So this one for example, it was obviously cold so I usually have a hat on. So that’s erm like a fisherman’s jacket, I often am going to the gym or walking or having laptops and stuff so, I have a backpack on. I don’t, you know like. I will, have a little handbag maybe if I’m going out at night but I’m not somebody who would carry a handbag around with me like over the shoulder or something like that, it always tends to be a rucksack. Erm, so and I think, you know, it is to do with I think comfort is a massive thing. Erm, and practicality is a massive thing! Because I often find that female clothing sometimes isn’t practical or it doesn’t keep you, you know the kind of waterproof or you know having something on your shoulders. I do feel there’s a practical kind of element there. I think I’ve got like that yellow jumper on, so it tends to be big baggy jumpers, and you’re right like to wear a kind of feminine coat on top of a big baggy jumper often doesn’t look good. Erm, and I suppose, I don’t, I don’t really know, I suppose like I. How I feel about it. I don’t know whether I feel emotionally about it at all? (Laughs) It is, it’s like a, feeling comfortable, feeling cool, feeling free. Because as you know I don’t wear bras.

P – Mmm.

J – So I have got a little tank top on today. But that is to do with, I don’t like to be restricted. I don’t like feeling restricted, I don’t like having things that are too tight to my body almost.

P – You have a busy day though don’t you so you need to be able to go about that day.

J – Yeah. And you know, you can be running from lecture halls, you could be sitting down. If I have like a meeting or something, like for example I’m an external examiner for another university. So when I go there then I’ll probably wear something a little bit more smart. So a job interview for example. I’m trying to think what I wore for my job interview here, it was a big woollen dress. So something that you can throw on.

P – mmm.

J – So erm yeah, comfort’s a big thing. I think that erm, it just feels better. It feels better to have a big baggy jumper on. I don’t know if that’s to do with my weight? You know my weight fluctuates quite a

lot, so sometimes I'm bigger sometimes I'm, you know, smaller. Erm, and throwing on kind of big shirts and stuff like that maybe, makes me feel more comfortable rather than on show.

P – Yeah. So when you're wearing tight clothes? Do you ever wear tight clothes?

J – Yeah, I do. I wear tight jeans I suppose, but then I would always choose to have a baggier jumper.

P – So when somethings tight, how do you feel about that?

J – Erm, it depends on the day that I'm having. So if I'm like really bloated then I wouldn't choose to wear tight clothes. If I wasn't, you know, if the clothes were feeling. I suppose I don't want to have lots of rolls or anything like that so if it's you know, if it's looking good then it's alright. But sitting down! I spend a lot of time sitting down so leggings are more comfortable. So something that isn't really tight against my body. I always remember being at work and, I don't know whether I told you this last time, but when I used to wear bras and just having to take my bra off in the middle of the day and just thinking I'm not wearing that again! Like it's just SO uncomfortable, it's just really not helping me at work. So yeah, practicalities there, Erm, let's have a look (at the photos on the laptop). Yeah I like that jumper. I tend to get a lot of comments on that jumper so I've got skinny jeans on there and then that jumper that I bought from a second hand place in France. Erm, so it's kind of like an 80's jumper and it was in the men's section and I tend to go to the men's section because, you know. Yeah, so yeah, I will buy, I'll obviously buy stuff in the female section as well. But I find those big jumpers like I can turn the sleeves up on them. I just think they look better, on me.

P – Yeah. Especially women's vintage I suppose, tends to be quite small.

J – Yeah. And like I wouldn't wear, for example, on a, what I would wear in the day and what I wear at night are very different. If I was going on a night out and I do go out quite a lot, so! (Laughs) I would tend to be, erm, so I've got like a, a kind of velvet pencil skirt, and American Apparel one. And I'll wear that usually with black tights and trainers and then like a t-shirt like a slouchy t-shirt. I wouldn't wear that to work for example. I wouldn't wear a skirt, like I don't know when was the last time I wore a skirt to work?

P – Erm why?

J – Because I find it too restrictive, I find that I can't. Erm, it doesn't, suit my daily needs of running around, walking into work, then my tights falling down! You know like (Laughs) the gusset being around my knees! (Laughs) Erm, so I just find trousers a lot more practical.

P – So when you go out and you wear your feminine skirt but you balance that with...

J – A t-shirt

P – ...a t-shirt.

J – So I won't, I wouldn't. I tend to and I suppose that's kind of a male or female, but casual smart kind of thing as well. Like I, I tend to like to wear, like if I've got something smart on the bottom then you know I tend to be more casual on the top, that's just kind of my style I suppose.

P – So you feel more like your style like?

J – Yeah, more comfortable, more I feel, I feel its cooler, if that's not a, too much of an arbitrary term? I think it looks, to me it looks better.

P – So cooler as in

J – Trendier!

P – Less effort made?

J – Yeah, yeah yeah yeah. And I think one of the erm, so for example I went to. Do you know Lytham? Have you heard of a place called Lytham? Right so Lytham, my friend lives there. So it's kind of. She's got kind of quite well to do friends who, you know, are always dressed up. So whenever I go and see her, and she's a friend from Preston. Whenever I go to see her, I notice how different my style is to everybody else. Whereas I feel in Manchester, you just blend in, everybody, certainly with my group of

friends. We're quite eclectic, we've got different styles and erm, and so they understand that that's just me. But when I go there, we went to this kind of charity event and it was a Thursday night and I had these trainers on and I had a pink like roll neck jumper on but leggings, but people had high heels on and people had, you know, full faces of make-up, very structured like. Looked like they were going to a wedding! And that made me think and I could see people looking at me and it made me feel uncomfortable, just because I was out of an environment that I was comfortable in. So that's when suppose I notice it a little bit more. But I wouldn't kind of change the way I dress, I just noticed that it was perhaps a lot less feminine to.

P – Is Lytham out towards Liverpool? Lytham St Annes is it?

J – Yeah Lytham St Annes, it's like Blackpool way.

P – Right.

J – So it's, it's kind of seaside, posh, posh seaside. So footballers live there and...

P – I'm just thinking about cultural differences between Manchester and somewhere else.

J – Yeah. Because I'm from Preston originally, so that's where I grew up and it was the same then. At College for example, I didn't really care! I think that was one of the things. So I used to wear, blokes jogging bottoms, a cap and a hoodie. And that's what I'd wear day to day, but then when I went out at night I might wear a dress or I might wear, and people would always think, you know it would be a bit of a contrast from there to there. I don't wear very much make-up, I've got a bit of a suntan at the moment which helps! (Laughing). But like you can see there (Looking at image with France jumper) like I've got no make-up on, erm, probably a little bit greasy hair. I don't know!

P – It was very cold then. It was all about survival!

J – (Laughing) It was! But then I remember erm, because, there was, because then it started to get sunny and there was a few photographs that I did outside. And I remember like kind of, you know like I would be planning. Thinking more consciously about that to wear because obviously we're doing this, and thinking about what was in my wardrobe. And it kind of yeah, what I would normally wear but kind of probably thinking a little bit more. So yeah jumpers (looking at photos). So another big jumper there, that's from the Oxfam. Looks like I've got really bog boobs there! Ha-ha! Which I haven't (Laughing). So yeah, yeah...

P – Same thing

J – Yeah, same thing. So big jumpers and just to kind of feel comfortable. I like it when the sleeves are over my hands. I think it's because I'm quite tall as well, and quite, you know like I'm, it kind of feels, I don't want to feel like my sleeves are too( points to the arm above the wrist to indicate a sleeve length), like I don't want to feel like clothes are small on me. So I suppose it a bit about feeling like they're baggier on me and I can roll them up.

P- So if the clothes are bigger?

J – Mmm.

P – How is it making you feel?

J – I feel like it makes me look smaller. So I feel like, because I'm quite tall and because I probably kind of edge on, you know, plus size for want of a better word, in female clothes, maybe it's something to do with the fact that I don't feel big in men's clothes. Bigger than you know, my petite friends. You know, and I think erm, you know people will say, err you know you've got your own style, you've got your unique style. Because I remember working in Liverpool and somebody, you know and the girls in the office there. They'd be hairspray on in between lectures, you know, going and putting a full face of make-up on and always touching it up, whereas I might put a bit of make-up on, but I very rarely touch it up in the afternoon unless you know.

P – Once it's done its on that's it.

J – Oh yeah that's it and then. I remember going on a night out, my leaving night out and I had leggings on I had some boots on and I had a big baggy shirt, but I'd done some red lipstick and I had earrings in and stuff. And I remember this girl going, you've got, you know, you wouldn't, it's a very strange style for Liverpool, and she's like you know, Liverpool girls wouldn't, and in her very stereotypical opinion. You know, she could see I was making some form of effort, but it was so different from what she would wear and she would have a briefcase and a handbag and her hair would be done and she'd have a, like a big fitted shirt on. And she looked great you know it was her style, like tight pants, but that would have just made me feel, you know I wouldn't have been able to sit down and work I don't think. And she'd commented on the fact that I had my own sense of style and that she liked it but that it was something that she'd never really seen before.

P – There's definitely a style difference between Manchester and Liverpool.

J – Liverpool, yeah, and I found it fascinating because I hadn't really spent much time in Liverpool and when we used to go out and I'd just like kind of think, that couple have just gone out for a little bit of tea. Whereas me and my boyfriend would just like, I'd scrape my hair back and we'd sit down and we'd just like share some food whereas they'd made, REALLY made, like both really made an effort! Like, you know the guys as well, like very fitted in what they were wearing whereas I suppose it's a bit more like kind of erm, slouchy and casual and laid back and a different kind of vibe in Manchester I suppose.

P – So just as an offshoot of what you've just said, because you dress maybe slightly different to a lot of people, do you think that that's more to do with dressing for you rather than maybe what other people would expect to see?

J – Yeah.

P – Just because what I'm thinking about the Liverpool lady is that. Is she wearing what she thinks people want to see?

J – Yeah. And what guys want to see as well! And I think, I think I've always had this thing about dressing for men and dressing for women, and you know, I'm a heterosexual, I've got a, you know I've got a boyfriend at the moment. But when I used to, I remember thinking when I was going on a night out, I'm dressing for the judgement of other women, men don't care what I wear. You like, you know, very rarely. Some guys would be like oh you look nice or whatever, or I like your trainers or something like that! (Laughing) But it would be more like that that it would be, and I think, I think as a woman, you are far more judged by what you wear by other women than you are by men. It's not about you know, dressing to look sexy for men, or anything like that, but I've always dressed as an individual. Like I said as I grew up, I always used to, for some reason I'd want to wear my Dad's big jumpers to go to the pub in, rather than steal my Mum's kind of vintage jackets or something like that. Erm, so yeah, I think it is about me dressing for me, and not dressing for or dressing to be kind of. I think for me it's more about doing something for my individual shape, size and style and comfort, because to wear something that didn't feel comfortable or that I felt that I was dressing to try to fit in somewhere that's just not what, that's just not what I would do. It's not, you know, I think you're definitely influenced by your friends and things. But I've really liked this kind of shift, to the err, and I think I was doing it anyway, but to the kind of like the early 90's, baggy jumpers and you know, girls are wearing, women are wearing more male clothing. There is a bit more of a, you know, kind of shift to that I suppose.

P – I think there's both isn't there. I mean there's the very bodycon, boohoo girls.

J – Mmm, yeah.

P – And then there's, then there's the other side to it, but I think the good thing about fashion is that there's so much difference now.

J – So there's not just one style. I think when I'm talking about that, I'm talking about my friends and. It think kind of going to festivals. You know like you go to festivals, well I don't go to as many now, but I used to and I remember like kind of thinking you know. You've got to dress for all seasons at a festival haven't you. And often you'd be, you'd have a little knapsack wouldn't you and you'd have little shorts on if it's hot then you'd need to put something warmer on. But I remember thinking, god all there layers! Like this would have been, kind of 2000, 10 years ago let's say. I was thinking, these layers look good! It actually looks really good to have leggings and t-shirt and then a jumper and you can kind of



see a bit of your t-shirt there and then a little hat on and I was like this actually looks really good. This is, you know, kind of layering up makes me feel better. (Looking at photos) Oh that's me as a leopard (Laughs) We'll ignore that one! That's me trying to show, again! Even though that's a pink jumper, for the international male (laughing), that's what that jumper says inside! (laughing) Yeah, always wearing my, yeah you know again, survival. Timberland boots, trainers. I would NEVER dream of wearing shoes for work. You know like, I used to kind of think that I would have to do it. You know like kind of shoes. Now I can't stop wearing trainers.

P – You get used to it though.

J – Yeah! Because I walk into work as well which is about 25-30 minutes. Then sometimes I walk to the gym and all that and you've just got to have sturdy shoes on.

P – But like you were saying about your job role. You can so

J – Yeah exactly, so I know people who will walk to work in trainers and then they'll change shoes when they get to work. But then, and it was. At the hairdressers, there's a woman there that I know that does hair and she's on, she wears high heeled shoes and she's on her feet all day. But you know like, and she's very erm, she's got great style, very kind of 70's floaty. So she's always got some beautiful dress on which really suits her, but she'll always have high heels on. And yeah, and she probably, it's not her style to wear trainers. But erm it's just, god how would you get anywhere in high heels?

P – I think err, I knew somebody who couldn't wear flats

J – For so long yeah, I have heard that before as well. Erm, yeah so what, I've got jeans on there. Skinny Levis jeans, that I need more of. So yeah that kind of, yeah just like a slouchy jumper that was from the men's section somewhere and the pasta slut t-shirt which was my friends. Erm yeah trainers. So that's like, in that, I remember on that day I felt like pretty good. Because after I had the body scan I was pretty disgusted with the shape of myself! (Laughs) On that body scan it kind of shocked me about how large I was at the bottom, and kind of how you know. That's not what I see you know, when I look in the mirror when I got kind of clothes on. I felt it looked like I was huge. And so, and I ended up going on a diet after that. Erm, because I was kind of thinking to myself, right this you know. And like clothes were a little bit tight, and all that kind of stuff so I'd been on a diet maybe for a week or something or a couple of weeks. And I remember thinking, this feels good, I can tuck my t-shirt into my jeans and it looks better and erm my face looked a bit skinnier at the time and then you know. Not through, I didn't do anything stupid I just reduced my calorie intake and went to the gym a bit more.

P – Did you actually lose weight or did you just feel better?

J – I lost, I'd lost like a couple of. Because when you'd weighed me I was like bloody hell, so I think I'd lost about half a stone. I'm probably, you know, somewhere in between there now. But erm, it was mainly feeling better. You know it's, and just kind of you know. Being able to, to fasten jeans up and like I like to have a tucked in t-shirt. I think that looks nice.

P – A baggy t-shirt

J – Baggy, yeah.

P – So it was more, it sounds like, you say it was the proportions of your body?

J – Yeah, yeah it was like, it was how, to look at that, I just kind of thought, I am so, I am so bottom heavy.

P – But when do you look at yourself?

J – Yeah exactly. And it shocked me what other people might.

P – And what you've said to me about the way you dress, is balancing that out anyway.

J – Mmm.

P – So you don't see that.

J – Definitely. So yeah I felt better there and the sun was shining obviously, you always feel better when the sun shines.

P – So do you think that you have a problem with your body shape generally? Or do you just kind of get on with life.

J – I get on with it yeah. I don't, it doesn't, it doesn't really bother me. Unless, the only time it does is if I'm, you know, in a bikini in front of someone, you know. In front of people walking around in your underwear, that's not what you want to do is it. So it's only then when you know, people are actually having to see your body. I'm not like that in front of my boyfriend and I feel like I'm quite body confident, erm and I don't, I'm not really bothered about that. But, I also feel I've got an inbuilt thing as a female to erm, want to lose weight, but you know like. I feel like it was, it was definitely you know, influenced by my Mum who was on weightwatchers for as long as I can remember. Who has always kind of told me when I've put on weight, or, just in that Motherly way sometimes? You know like that kind of thing. I remember once when I was just like, and she was like I've never seen you eat so much chocolate and you can tell! You know like that, you're putting on weight and she was like you know, just be careful and things, so not in a way, you know of, giving me lots of grief about it, but you know that kind of thing. So I do feel, I do feel like that but I do, I feel less and less like that as I get older.

P – Do you think there's erm, do you think people are more open about their body shape? More accepting of other people's body shapes?

J – Yeah.

P – Or do you think that there's a lot of judgement on body shapes? How do you feel about that?

J – I think there's both. I think. It think there's yeah, I do think there's a lot of judgment. I sometimes hear people. Like I'm always interested when people say, and I don't know who that person is, 'she's a bigger girl'. I'm always like, what's your version of bigger? Because I think, that's you know, kind of subjective, isn't it, to what you kind of think. So I'm always really interested in what people think of that, but I think more erm. I think certainly, with the group of friends I'm with now we kind of celebrate each other a lot more and we're probably a lot less judgemental. Like in my 20's, like you know, this was always one of the things is that I found a letter from my friend when she was at University and I'd gone home, and erm. Seventy-five percent of that letter was about her body, how much she needed to lose weight, she was trying to lose weight and she was about a size 10 then and erm you know, five foot seven. You know there was not kind of, she wasn't over weight at all. And I remember thinking, I'm glad we're not all as transfixed on that now.

P – Do you think that that's and age thing?

J – I think it's an age thing. I also think that there's, there's you know, we are. People you know, not that I really want to say about the Kardashian's or, but Beyoncé things like that and Rhianna. People who are you know, naturally more curvaceous and are not you know, trying to be a size zero. Because there was a whole size zero time wasn't there, where people were really you know. It was be as thin as possible, that was the current trend and now I think there is a bit more flexibility on, you know, erm, on body shape. So I think it's both, but I think it's an age thing as well. Erm, yeah so, (looking at photos) that jacket, that sheepskin jacket, that's just, I mean it's warm as well it's just amazing.

P – It's a guy's one?

J – Yeah.

P – Is it kind of oversized on you?

J – Yeah. It's an XXXL in a males, so yeah it's big. And because, there as well, because it's just on my hips and I can fasten it up. Which a lot of things around my hips, you know, I can't always fasten up. So, if there's like a long jacket for example. I've got this kind of, erm. I don't think I ever took a photo of it, but it's like a long khaki jacket with a big hood. It's a female jacket but, it fits everywhere, but it just pinches at my hips sometimes. So, I've got to you know, that doesn't look right a lot of the time. But where it fits perfectly everywhere else, or even is a bit too big here so (upper body)

P – So, what you're saying is the shape of the man's garment with it being more boxy is enabling you to get your hips in.

J – Yeah. Oh yeah erm (looking at photographs). Yeah those Mum jeans and erm, yeah t-shirts again, wanting to tuck the t-shirt in.

P – That's the same look isn't it really? There's your jacket again, it does look warm! (Laughing)

J – Yeah it is! (Laughing)

P – Ok, so I've got questions about compensatory femininity, which is kind of the balance, which we've discussed.

J – Yeah

P – We've discussed occasion and company. Erm. Can you tell me what you think makes an item of clothing masculine?

J – Erm,

P – Possibly thinking about particular characteristics.

J – I think something that is, erm, I think it's the fit more than anything. So T-shirts for example. I maybe wouldn't go for so much masculine sometimes as unisex maybe, but I think a t-shirt that's fitted, you know like the women's t-shirts that can go in at the waist, as opposed to having no curve in them. And I think that can look really frumpy on somebody like me, like a t-shirt that's fitted like that, or a shirt that's fitted. I think it looks frumpy, I think it looks middle aged as well so there's an age thing. Erm, yeah so I suppose just being quite straight, having no kind of curve in them, that's masculine as well. I don't really think about erm, colour too much, because I've had like pink shirts that have been masculine because of the style rather than the colour. So I don't think, erm it's not a colour thing for me I don't think, what I thinks masculine or not. Erm, do you mean like what I would pick, like something I would pick out?

P – Erm, just if there are any characteristics such as, I mean the obvious one is like a collar or if you are thinking about particular details. Or thinking about what isn't masculine I suppose as well.

J – Yeah I think anything that's, cause like I mean because guys can wear very skinny t-shirts and they can wear skinny jeans that kind of thing, it depends on style. Erm, I think it's, I think erm. I'm trying to think. It's more about shape for me. Looking at something and looking at the shape of it, and thinking, yeah and it not having that kind of, it would just be baggier.

P – So, when you choose men's clothing, you're going more for the shape. So what about the detail in comparison to women's clothing? So considering what you might think of as feminine clothing and masculine clothing. What makes you choose masculine clothing do you think? Over the characteristics of the feminine clothing.

J – I think it's sometimes also about the kind of pattern, and erm, you know for example kind of having. I mean this doesn't really work, I'm struggling to answer this. It's more about erm, I suppose. That's not true! I suppose, I have got silk shirts but they're not fitted silk shirts, which are kind of feminine. I've have got erm, you know aztecy stuff or stripes, so I wouldn't wear something that's flowery, or something with a high fluffy collar, which would like, kind of, you know like a. I can't think of the word, like those bow shirts, which would suit you actually! You would suit that kind of.

P – I do wear them!

J- I can see you in that. Whereas that just wouldn't look right on me at all. Things that are plain and simple. That's what I tend to go for that's what I trend to pick, and men's clothing seems to be a lot more simple.

P – Yeah

J – So not have kind of big features on it or you know, kind of elaborate bits of it.

P – And that's what you see as feminine?

J – Yeah, yeah that would be my idea of feminine.

P – What about fabric? Do you think there's anything?

J – Erm, yeah I suppose there's a lot more, I tend to go for the erm, the more kind of cotton and you know denim kind of stuff. The kind of simple styles again. Rather than again like I said I've got like a silk shirt, erm. Chunky knit jumpers, I tend to favour over fine knit ones.

P – I'm hearing heavy, heavy weight?

J – Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

P – So, also you say you've got a silk shirt? Because they behave differently on your body don't they? So a silk shirt would, when you walk it would stick to you.

J – Stick to you yeah.

P – Things like that. So do you think about that kind of thing? Like when you're actually wearing the clothing what's going to happen?

J – Yeah, yeah because like I've got a little t-shirt on here and I'll find myself doing, (pull t-shirt neckline up to cover chest area) doing that a lot, just to kind of cover up a little bit. Again, dependent on the day, the time of the month. I bloat as well and things so, I often don't want things to stick to my skin so much.

P – We've talked about fit. We've talked about your body, we've done that bit! Ok, so this is more to do with. Less to do with clothing and more to do with what you think about masculinity and femininity possibly as traits. So, erm, how do you think you would describe masculinity? It's a tricky question, but see how you go.

J – Erm, ok. How would I describe masculinity? Erm, it's hard because I think both masculinity and femininity are different things(light goes off), can be very very different things and I would describe myself as masculine and feminine in different ways. But I suppose, masculinity is, a little bit more. Is this just masculinity in general?

P – Yeah, as in traits, what you would think of as masculine, opposed, you know as separate from clothing.

J – Right ok, something that's typically. I don't really know, I find that really hard. I do find that really hard. I think because I could say things like, that pop into my head, but I don't, because as a sociologist I'm constantly critiquing that! So masculinity can be anything and I could say things like you know, kind of being more emotionless and detached and erm, things like that, but I don't really think that is masculinity. I just, I feel like those, masculinity and femininity are just. I think they're constantly changing and I think that erm, they're just constructions, I don't really think that they exist. You know, I don't think anybody, I don't know what they mean anymore, because I don't feel like that. Yeah, I don't know.

P – So you don't know what they mean anymore because of the time that we're living in?

J – Yeah, I suppose, but the time that we're living and my lifestyle as well I suppose. You know, because what is it to be. I suppose I find it easier to talk about. I don't know, I'm struggling with that.

P – It's hard. So the things that popped into your head that you didn't want to say were more sort of err...

J – Stereotypical ideas.

P – ...old fashioned ideas possibly?

J – You know that we've got a lot of, you know kind of. What are the stereotypes of something and what they actually mean to me are completely different things. So the stereotypes of like masculinity, being about bravery, and strength and being detached and having no emotion. I think that's the stereotype, but I don't think that's the, you know, that's not the embodiment of it I see of having any meaning to me. If you know what I mean? And the same with feminine, so feminine being kind of erm,

emotional, maternal, being dainty, being you know kind of small. I think that's the stereotype, but it's not, yeah it's not something that has kind of meaning to me in term of what is masculine and feminine.

P – Do you mean to you personally because of the kind of person you are or do you think it just doesn't exist anymore? That kind of femininity.

J – Erm, I think it does exist and I think that people try to embody it and people do embody it, but it's not something that kind of has relevance to my life or how I would kind of classify somebody. You know like, it just doesn't have anything. I don't know!

P – Do you think it has any relevance?

J – To what? To me?

P – To the way that we live?

J – I think it's having less relevance. I think it still does have relevance. I think, one of the things that I've thought about with this a lot is my nephew, he's four. He wears, you know like he's been brought up around girls. He's been, you know he favours female friends over male friends and he wear dresses and he wants to wear pink all the time and he wants to do all that and. You know my brother is really worried that he's going to be bullied and that he's going to, you know, he's not going to have a great life and all that. And I was thinking to myself all that he's going to be you know, angry with him when he's older, to say why did you let me wear those dresses? You know I can see that he's trying to get him a batman watch and jeans like and stuff. So like it made me really think about what it means to be male and what it means to be female and I do think we're entering a kind of time with that gender fluidity, where you know, it's not about these two kind of extremes with these stereotypical images it's about. And that might change throughout your life as well. So yeah being four, being fourteen, being twenty-four, being thirty-four. I think it, you know, I think there are some people that kind of, who would say that they are very feminine and fixed and girly, but I don't know whether. I think that also that's changing and can be different things. So whereas you know, what I will do, I feel like my life can be both feminine and masculine at the same time. Even by what I wear every day, that there's a bit of everything and I suppose my temperament as well. But what is masculine and feminine anymore, because I think that that can cause a lot of problems is having these two extreme ideals because of, you know, because you're kind of putting yourself into a box or trying to say that if a male has these traditional female traits then he isn't a real man and if a female is kind of having these you know, is maybe more detached and is not maternal then there's something wrong, you know. I think whether it's got relevance, I think maybe it should have less relevance, I don't know. It's difficult.

P – Hmm, I was thinking about the four year old boy and it doesn't really matter what he wears.

J – No exactly

P – So what do you think it's because of what we've learnt and what we know?

J – Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah and so what! I remember being called a tomboy when I was younger, but that didn't you know, that didn't really bother me. You know, I felt like I was being true to my identity in what I wore and what I, you know. There's a picture of me in a bridesmaids dress, but I'm sat, you know, like that with my legs open and it just looks dreadful! (Laughing)(Slumps down in chair with legs open) You know like because, it looks really, it's like putting somebody who doesn't normally sit in a dress in, you know I was about ten at the time or something.

P – Do you think on the occasions where you do wear a dress now, do you think you carry yourself differently?

J - Yeah.

P – Behave slightly differently?

J – Yeah, definitely. I think I erm, I probably. You know like when I think about what I'm like at a wedding for example. The way that I would get in and out of a chair or have to get in and out of a chair, because, you know skirt rides up skirt falls down. How I've got to kind of sit up straighter because you know to keep everything, so I'm not like a slouched down which I would want to do a lot more naturally.

Erm, I think kind of you know, I would wear high heels then, and just being able to walk places, you know, sometimes it's like you know, you've got to walk from the church to the reception or something and just the practicalities of walking in high heeled shoes is just, it's just awful. So I definitely carry myself differently.

P – So you say you can't slouch, is that something to do with the clothing?

J – Yeah, I think it's the way that the clothing looks on you. Yeah something to do with the way that it looks, but also the way that it feels I suppose.

P – Would you wear something, is it something tighter?

J – Yeah, so yeah more.

P – Ok, Do you think that you're masculine at all?

J – Yeah I probably am in, yeah in some ways.

P – In what kinds of ways?

J – Erm, again, it's, erm.

P – Or is it you feel, you're not sure if you're feminine?

J – Yeah or masculine. Yeah I think that's probably it. I feel like, I'm thinking about who I get on with. I get on with males and females, but I don't think either, any of those people really embody like a masculine or feminine stereotype. Erm, because again, I'm not sure what it is to be masculine anymore. Or, I suppose I'm talking about emotion aren't I a lot, in how I'm describing masculine and feminine.

P – What about body shapes? Err, body descriptions or to do with physical attributes to do with masculinity. What do you think about that?

J – Like being muscly and things? What do I have any of those?

P – No, what do you think about that in terms of masculinity and femininity and also to do with yourself.

J – Yeah, I think that. Yeah I suppose, if you think about kind of muscle and fat. So perhaps men, because I think I find it easier to talk about men and women rather than masculinity and femininity. And what, maybe going back to the kind of biological stuff that's going on there.

P – Because? Why?

J – I think it's because of. I think I just struggle dealing with the terms masculine and feminine, because they're so stereotypical and so boxed in times of.

P – And like you said before they're cultural, culturally constructed.

J – Hmm. Yeah. So if somebody was to say to me you're quite masculine let's say, erm I wouldn't see that as a bad thing. No one has said that to me before really, but no one has said I'm feminine before either. No one's commented in either sense. They might have said I'm a tomboy or you know, I get on with men. You know like I have close male and female friends. I'm not somebody who just has female friends or somebody who just has male friends, you know like I've got both. Erm, but if somebody said I was, you're very feminine no one has done that, no one has said that I'm masculine. So I suppose I don't feel like I fit into that at all.

P – Do you think that it's necessary?

J – No I don't, I don't think it's necessary. I think it's necessary for some people, I think it's necessary for some people's sense of identity, but it's not necessary for mine. I think if somebody, I think if a female was called masculine, some females if they were called masculine, they might take offence at that. Whereas the only thing I could think of if somebody was saying that is that it would be that had a very kind of straight up and down body. It would more be about their physical

P – Physical

J – Physical being. Sorry I don't feel like I'm answering the questions very well!

P – The ones about femininity and masculinity are difficult. But I wanted to ask them anyway!  
(Laughing)

J – Yeah (laughing).

P – Ok so this is to do with gender (using gender scale visual) so this is a gender scale that I've kind of stolen and changed. Where would you put yourself? What number do you think you are?

J – I suppose just in the middle, like a, you know, I'm maybe a 5, I'm somewhere in between. I wouldn't say that I'm G.I. Joe.

P – Do you think that the way you dress is reflected in where you have put yourself on there?

J – Yeah I reckon so. I've never, I'll never be those two extremes you know, it's more kind of taking some senses of being female and some kind of senses of being male I suppose. Like you know, I suppose going back to that question. I'm tall, I've got a very typically feminine figure, so you know I've got hips, I've got some boobs. I've not got lots of boobs, but it's not like I've got you know, I've got a very curvaceous figure in terms of my hips in terms of my bum and all that kind of stuff so, I'm typically female looking I would say, but just choose to not, to look you know, look different.

P – So we've discussed all these. Ok so I've got some images that I've used for a, like a pilot that I did, and it was to do with masculinity and femininity in clothing. So I just want you to look at the images and tell me if you think that the garments are made for a male or a female body.

J – Ok. Err, I would say that that's made for a male body.

P – Why do you think? Can you tell me what you think?

J – Erm so the reason why I'm, well it's kind of because it's not fitted I suppose. The collar on there, do I think that that looks? I think it's very kind of, I think it's very 70's. It's kind of like it's made for males with a flamboyant edge! (Laughing) You know what I mean, but a woman could wear it as well. Like I think depending on your personality and your style it could be both, but it looks like it, it looks like it's been made for a male body.

P – Ok. Is it difficult to tell because it's not on a person?

J – Yeah I suppose so yeah, cause I'm just kind of looking at the, because is there a bit of gold in there? No I can't see.

P – There isn't no.

J – Ok, so. I mean that could be either because I can't see the. Err, I'd say that that's male because. Why would I say its male I don't know?!

P – Do you think that it is though?

J – If I'd seen that on a hanger, I'd be more looking at how that would, rather than is that male or female like, what would that look like on me I suppose. I suppose it looks like the suit pants, so I would say that they're male, but they could totally be female as well.

P – Like a female version of

J – Yeah. So erm, again, that's quite, it's got no real shape to it, it's quite a straight down vest. Again, I could see like a, I could see a bloke in that, kind of in 70's style, but I could equally see a female in it as well. I suppose there's that juxtaposition of it being pink but then having a car on it at the same time. So if the question is do I see that as being for a male or a female, well either.

P – Either yeah.

J – Erm, I suppose, it's difficult. I'd say that that's more female because it looks like it's bigger at, but then I'm talking about me female, because it's bigger at the waist and then tapered down, but then

equally you could have a bloke in those as well. I suppose because they're skinnier, it's bigger there and then skinnier there, but then it could be either.

P – So what makes it so difficult? Is it because they're pictures, is it because they're not on a person? If they were here would it make it easier?

J – Erm, I don't know. I think it's because I'm trying to imagine somebody in them and I can imagine both sexes in them, so I suppose I don't think about who they've been made for but what they will look like.

P – Yeah, ok. So this is two of the items on myself and my friend. So this is part of the pilot and I wanted to ask you which model looks the most feminine?

J – OK, erm. Well they both look feminine in different ways. I suppose this person here you would say is feminine because, long hair, possibly like bigger bust there, wider hips? I don't know maybe?! But then you know the kind of. But here there's like femininity in face and neck and yeah just being like kind of slim and attractive. Which is more feminine? I don't know.

P – That's OK!

J – I think they're both feminine in their own ways.

P – This one. I couldn't get that one to go into a file for some reason.

J – I think just like the other one, this person looks better in the clothes to me. Is that you?!

P – Yeah!

J – Is it?! Oh right! Because of the, so going back to the other one as well it's kind of like well, rather than. I don't know! I think I have a problem with judging people on, well I have a problem with those words feminine and masculine, therefore I find it difficult to kind of, but I can tell you who I think looks better, who I think looks better in them. Because of height, I think here, I think that looks and you know the kind of shape, erm

P – Do you think that even though, both of the models are wearing exactly the same thing that the person is having an impact on how the clothing looks? Even though they're quite similar sized people?

J – Yeah, yeah, yeah.

P – So can you talk about that a little bit?

J – Ok, so I just I think that the fit of the clothes is, looks better on you here. So I think it kind of like. I can see there's something to do with the style in term of hair, in terms of you know, broadness of shoulders here as well in terms of how that shirts fits. So it looks, because you look. This person looks like they've put on male clothing. This person looks like they're wearing, it looks more fashionable I suppose. It looks like, it doesn't look. I don't know! It's difficult this!

P – It's difficult!

J – It's interesting!

P – Because we're in exactly the same pose

J – Yeah

P – It's a difficult thing to capture and it's something that I'm interested in. Like what IS that.

J – Yeah exactly.

P – It's that person that can wear anything or that person that can't wear anything

J – Yeah

P – But if the situation was switched around and I was in her clothing?



J – Yeah, exactly. I think it's, it's definitely a kind of, it's a stylistic thing isn't it. And I don't know whether it's to do with you know, it's kind of. As you say, you're the same kind of shape ish.

P – She does have bigger boobs than me you can see that.

J – Yeah. Erm, but they don't look like her clothes. They look like she's put on something for fancy dress or has just thrown something on. They look like your clothes, they look like.

P – They are my clothes (laughing)

J – (Laughing) It's a style thing. It suits you.

P – So it's to do with identity I suppose. Like what we were just maybe saying about the gender. Do you think it's kind of linked to that, the way that you are able to carry off a certain thing?

J – Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I think that, you know, there's using that phrase as well, that phrase of carrying it off. Being able to carry it off. Erm, which is you know. But I think you, sorry, I think you look feminine there. I wouldn't say that, I wouldn't say, I think it's a different version of femininity. I think there's lots of different versions of femininity. I wouldn't say. And again going back to, not that necessarily it should be a bad thing to say that someone looks masculine, but I think that you know. It suits you and you do look feminine and you look styled and comfortable.

P – So like it kind of 'fits', me.

J – Yeah.

P – And she looks less comfortable.

J – Yeah.

P – Do you think that it's easier to tell which gender the clothing is designed for now that it's on a person?

J – Erm

P – What would you say now about those?

J – I would say that the, yeah so it looks. So the tie I would say male, I'd say the shirt now looks female and the jeans look female. The shoes you know could be either.

P – The shirt is a men's dress shirt.

J – Is it?

P – Hmm. It's a massive massive size and it's got cuffs like these.

J – She looks like she's got a man's shirt on, you just look like you're wearing something that suits you!

P – So my net question is, do you think that clothing looks different on different people regardless of their body shape? So I think this is what we were just talking about, about carrying things off.

J – It's really interesting that! That's really kind of blown my mind a little bit! Looking at those different.

P – Just look at this one again (pink vest blue slacks)

J – Yeah, so going back to that.

P – What do you pick out as different about that in terms of femininity or masculinity?

J – I suppose again, this just looks like it just fits you better. And you know, you both kind of look feminine in your own way, but everything looks like it fits you. I think that's probably to do with your shoulders, the proportion of your waist to your hips and you know, you're being taller. I think it all kind of sits.

P – So there's more skin showing on this one.

J – Yeah

P – What do you think about skin showing and femininity and masculinity? In terms of clothing. Let's say male and female in terms of clothing.

J – Yeah,

P – And the fact of showing skin. Do you think that that's a female or a male thing? What do you think about that?

J – Females tend to show more skin definitely. Erm, just in terms of thinking about what you would wear on a daily basis. But I don't see, you know I suppose it's more feminine to show skin. I suppose, but then but you're not showing skin there in terms of. I mean you're not showing skin there, showing skin and being revealing are different things in my opinion.

P – Yeah good point

J – It's kind of if you've got something low cut and you've got cleavage or you've got your belly out or you know kind of. And you know, you kind of, it's a bit like that age old thing like you get your tits or your legs out but you don't get both out (laughing) that kind of thing! But having a bit. So if you'd have got. So say there, say if you'd had a short, you had shorts on for example, denim shorts on or you had a skirt on with that, I think that it would look perhaps more typically feminine, but because you've got trousers on at the same time, it's a little bit of both. I don't know. Yeah so there'd be something more revealing about that if you kind of had shorts or a skirt on.

P – The difference between revealing and showing of skin is interesting.

J – Yeah

P – Do you think that your choice to choose masculine clothing is anything to do with that?

J – I don't think it's to do, you know again. I think it's to do with being comfortable and covering up. For me that what it is. And feeling like I can be free in my body (laughs) to be able to get on with my daily life. I don't think female clothes suit my lifestyle.

P – So if you were wearing female clothes that were more revealing

J – I would feel really self-conscious. I would feel really self-conscious, I would feel. So for example I went out on Friday night and I had on a little like a little spaghetti strap dress that was tight up to there, but I had a big jacket on over the top of it and I had trainers on. So that was kind of. So I felt, it was, it allowed me to feel erm femi...not feminine, but it allowed me to kind of feel comfortable whilst kind of showing some skin as well, because I knew I was going to be in a hot club. And I knew I was going to be dancing around, erm but I wouldn't, I wouldn't have taken my jacket off.

P – If it was daytime, and it was a hot day, would you wear that dress in the day?

J – No.

P – Ok, so what do you think about occasion?

J – Yeah, so occasion definitely has something to do with it. If it's a hot day, I would wear denim shorts and I would wear a t-shirt. I would attempt to do that rather than, and flip flops or some trainers really if I'm going to be walking somewhere.

P – So you said you feel

J – Self-conscious

P – Self-conscious when you're revealing.

J – Yeah

P – Can you talk about that a little bit?

J – Yeah. I suppose like I don't. Having a little bit of skin on show is OK to feel comfortable with. But I just, I feel like if I've got too much on show, I feel that people. I feel like, I don't feel very comfortable, in terms of erm, just being able to relax and just being able to kind of, not feel like all of my skin is on show or that people are looking at me or that erm, I don't know.

P – Are you associating skin on show with tight clothing?

J – Yeah.

P – So thinking about revealing?

J – Mmm.

P – Because for instance, say I wear this (shows top worn underneath shirt), but under my arm you can see that (skin some bra), but that doesn't bother me at all.

J – No no no, that wouldn't bother me.

P – But if this was very tight and you could see my cleavage?

J – Yeah.

P – So do you think it's to do with erm the femininity of your body? Like showing the shape of your female body?

J – Yeah, I don't think. I don't know. It's about feeling, I suppose it's about feeling comfortable, because obviously that's quite low (indicates neckline of T-shirt) and, but I wouldn't take this off (shirt).

P – That's. Is that a T-shirt?

J – Yeah it's (shows sleeves of T-shirt)

P – So you wouldn't take that off (shirt)?

J – So I might, if it was hot I might do, but I would then tie that around my waist. Like I, just to, I don't know what it is.

P – You're wearing leggings

J – I've got leggings on yeah, so I don't want to be

P – So the outfit isn't designed to take your shirt off is it.

J – No, no no! (laughing) But if I had jeans on and a T-shirt, like if was hot

P – Yeah if you were working and it was hot.

J – Yeah, then I might do that, but I wouldn't, I'm always very, certainly when I'm lecturing as well. I'd much rather be, be erm. It's better when it's winter. I'm glad I don't have to lecture in the summer, because I would feel like I would be more on show.

P – Because everyone is looking at you.

J – Yeah, because everyone is looking at you anyway and what if my bra. You know like, I know it's not a massive deal, but like what if my, it went a bit too low and I bent. I'm always worried about that bending over and showing my boobs because I suppose I don't wear a bra, very often and err, I'd be worried about kind of revealing my boobs to people. I remember wearing a erm, I remember doing a lecture in front of like 250 people and I had on this kind of, it was like a tartan dress and it had gold buckles there (on the cuffs). It was when I started, just started lecturing and I thought I had to be dressed very presentable and like I was in business (laughing), I was doing all that which you just don't have to. And one of the buttons fell off my dress and it just like boing, boing and I just thought I can't, I absolutely cannot bend down to pick that up. I'm just going to have to leave it, because there was 250 people and the thought of just bending down and anything going up anywhere or anything like that. So I think I feel more protected by having more layers of clothing on.

P – Hmm

J - And you know, revealing. I might show a little bit of cleavage. Like I used to have a, like have a swimming costume on then having a big erm, vest on. Then I would maybe put denim shorts then I might tuck the vest into the pocket, to feel, to not feel like I've got anything on show. It's just feeling generally self-conscious, rather than feeling like it's anything to do with you know. And just trying to feel comfortable rather than feeling like it's not appropriate to show a lot of skin.

P – I think we're done!

J – Yeah! Was that alright? I feel like I didn't really answer any of your questions properly. It's difficult thinking about masculinity and femininity.

J – It always happens to me when the tape goes off! So, smaller boobs. I think having smaller boobs like, if you have big boobs it restricts what you can wear. Having smaller boobs you can wear a lot more stuff. As you say you can wear the T-shirt thing. Like being able to wear, you know so sometimes I would wear this shirt buttoned up to the top. And I think if you've got, I think it looks really odd if you've got big boobs and you try to wear that. You know like?

P – Maybe because of?

J – Yeah. So whereas I'm hippy. In the sense that I've got big hips not that I'm a hippie! You know like, you can wear, you can wear a lot more. Because a lot of my friends who have got big boobs will say, they'll look my top and say, I can't wear that! I can't wear that because of my bra, whereas to not wear a bra, you can wear a lot more t-shirts, you can wear a lot more, just yeah. You know like that top that you're wearing now. I think if somebody that was very big busted then it wouldn't fall right. You know it's got to kind of have that kind of flow and it's better to be a little bit kind of tighter around the hips but as long as it lays like that.

P – Is that to do with it fitting like you think it should fit based on what you've seen or what you think looks nice?

J – Yeah, probably what I think looks nice.



### **Participant profile. EVA W.**

Carrier Company. Cos. Muji. Margaret Howell. Toast. Old Town. Studio Nicholson. Adidas. Birkenstock. Marimekko. Girls on Top Tees. Second-hand.

***'I've felt that by wearing more masculine clothes or men's clothes or androgynous clothes, it actually makes me feel more feminine. I feel more girlish in a sense when I wear things that make me feel confident and wearing the very feminine outfit would make me feel ill at ease with myself. So it's getting that balance isn't it?'***

**Gender scale 5-6. Utilitarian. Navy. Stripes. Androgynous. French workwear**

**jackets. Blue. Navy. Forties, puff sleeve, buttons. No frills. Fisherman's smock. Age 53. Odd socks.**

EVA W is a graphic design lecturer at the art school at MMU, who prides herself on crafting an individual utilitarian style which she describes as androgynous. Her arts influences show in her clothing in what EVA W calls an 'arts look' and that 'there's a look to female arts staff so, but I don't like anyone getting too close to my whole look' (EVA W). At 53, EVA W now finds that 'I like having a uniform much more than I think, ten years ago I wouldn't have said that but I quite like having a sort of uniform that is interchangeable these days' (EVA W). She also realises that as an older woman she has less interest in the need to '...dress to appeal. I feel much more that I can dress for me' (EVA W).

She is aware that her style is unusual for a woman of her age, yet she says of clothing marketed for her age group that 'I just feel, I feel very middle aged when I wear those sorts of things as well and I feel younger if you put me in a t-shirt and some trousers. I feel more flexible, I just I don't want the restrain of something that's close fitting and overly sort of feminine' (EVA W). EVA W's clothing has space, 'it skims yeah, there's nothing hugging' (EVA W). Oversized plain shirts are a part of this 'uniform', and EVA W finds that 'I feel a bit more elegant and more stylish by wearing things that are buttoned up to the neck and longer and cover all and that makes me feel comfortable' (EVA W). She cites actresses such as Bette Davis in 1940's films as one of her influences, finding them '...feminine but with a controlled sort of career element to the way they dress' (EVA W). She hopes to influence her students in the same way by '...saying dress like, be like this, be confident...I don't know maybe I want a practicality for women' (EVA W).

EVA W finds her look is about '...getting the balance were the thing you feel comfortable in exposes the best of your sexuality, it exposes the best of your presence and your confidence. As a woman I don't want to be judged purely in a way of is she attractive and sexual, I want to be judged as Sue who is creative or who has something to say...' (EVA W).

## Eva W interview transcription.

P – So first if you could tell me what you're wearing today, just talk about what you've got on.

E – I'm wearing on the outer layer I'm wearing a Carrier Company long overall navy coat which is workwear and underneath that I've got a Cos padded jacket which is very, I call it my Chairman Mao jacket. It's very sort of utilitarian wear, blue and plain with sort of no collar. Under that I've got a Muji shirt navy, I'm all in navy today! Erm and that's buttoned up to the neck. My trousers are Cos and they're navy, very large plain trousers and I've got some Muji striped socks on and some Adidas blue and white stripe trainers.

P – Ok so which, erm is any of that menswear?

E – The Carrier Company is androgynous wear it's marketed for men and women and so the men's is exactly the same as the women's. I like Carrier Company because they have lots of items of clothing which are just exactly the same and I find that some of the labels that I choose that are womenswear are only, I only, I choose them because they are slightly androgynous.

P – Such as Muji I guess?

E – Yeah Muji.

P – Is Muji unisex?

E – I think Muji, it has women and menswear and the shirt was in womenswear, but I would happily wear Muji menswear as well. So there's only one item that's purely sort of menswear meets androgynous wear as I like to call it.

P – But everything is quite plain.

E – Yes and I like the idea that, I like having a uniform much more than I think, ten years ago I wouldn't have said that but I quite like having a sort of uniform that is interchangeable these days. And I don't know if that's an age thing or whether it's a practicality thing or whether it's almost just a style I've started to sort of feel at home with as I've got older. I tend to avoid now, I think in my thirties and forties I would have worn lower-cut things and I wore skirts an awful lot! (Laughs) I used to dress like I was going to a wedding in gold skirts every day, but my outfits seem to have changed in my sort of late forties, fifties. Partly because I just feel, I feel a bit comfier with myself, I feel like I don't have to prove something as much as I did when I was in my earlier years. And also my body's changed and I feel that I don't suit the skirts and the lower cuts as much as an older woman I feel a bit more elegant and more stylish by wearing things that are buttoned up to the neck and longer and cover all and that makes me feel comfortable.

P – So you're happier to cover up and you're saying that this is, you say it's your uniform. Is this for work? Do you dress differently at the weekend?

E – All the time, all the time no I don't wear differently at the weekend it will always. I've got so much navy workwear or blue workwear and I think I was doing that before it became, I'm not saying I'm not claiming it, but I think there was an era where there was the Bill Cunningham film came out and everyone started wearing French workwear jackets, but I think even if I look back at photographs of myself as a younger woman, I've got some things that are buttoned up sort of plain wear. But I would wear this at the weekend and I'd wear it on a Saturday night to go out and I'd probably get married in it! (Laughs) It doesn't it doesn't, you know I was laughing the other day thinking what would I wear to get married in and I do wear dresses still! But I like the fact that I feel a bit more, I feel like they're interchangeable items and I feel it's, I'm trying to avoid that word of capsule wardrobe because I don't like it, but I feel like it's a look that I suit and I feel more confident. As I've got older, I don't know its physical things as well! I have very bad varicose veins in one of my legs, so years ago I would wear skirts and dresses all the time whereas now I'm aware that that just gives a bit more discretion to something that is visually err, I'm not too bothered by them but I think it's better to sort of cover and also just physical things. I had breast cancer surgery five years ago and that definitely affected my cleavage and I'm not too worried about it or not too sort of overly concerned about those things, but it's certainly made me feel comfier when I'm wearing buttoned up things I feel a little bit more like I'm not aware of

that cleavage importance. Whereas probably in my thirties and early forties I would go out in something that was a bit more revealing and a bit more feminine. And maybe it's also, you know I'm fifty three and I do associate a release of not feeling, I think you dress for your own self and your own attraction and your own sort of definition of yourself and I've always been interested in style over sort of trying to be fashionable. I've always been interested in your own sort of personal style and but I think as you get older as woman, for me I've felt less erm, less having to dress to appeal. I feel much more that I can dress for me. I feel quite liberated by, sort of you know I've had to go into a very quick menopause because of the medication I've taken for breast cancer and that was very frightening but actually I've enjoyed the release of it. I feel much more like I go out like I want to go out and I'm not trying to get attraction and I've found that releasing and I've also found it, it still fits in with my own personal style but I've just found that I wear what I like wearing much more and I feel that I'm less dressing for a sexual appeal.

P – So it sounds like as you've got older you're just kind of dressing for yourself and you're comfortable in yourself.

E – Yeah and there's a practicality to it and I think, I mean I think what's interesting is also that workwear and utility wear has sort of come into fashion as well so labels that are womenswear that I buy would be things like the odd Margaret Howell when I can afford it! (Laughs) Or a bit of Toast because they sort of do things that are a bit more of that sort of work wear practicality. I find it frustrating, I mean I think a lot of women who are interested in that sort of style end up buying menswear, because when you go out shopping for womenswear in the centre of Manchester it's very hard to find utility garments. Muji have them, Cos have that look, but if you go into a lot of fashion stores it is the sort of scoop neck or the fancy dress or the you know high heel dress and it's hard I've sometimes resorted to menswear just because it seems more interesting. I think it's very hard to find a women's style shop in the city centre that caters for things that I like. Which is why I end up going online or looking at other labels that make things for men and women.

P – It seems like the things that are available in the city centre are possibly more fast fashion kind of thing? And you're buying more long term I would have thought?

E – I am quite interested in that fact that there's a sustainability in what you buy and you can keep, I mean I just have about five different work wear jackets! (Laughs) But I can interchange them and they last and it's not a throw away sort of style and I'm sure I'll still be wearing these things when I'm in my seventies! But I think in the centre of this city, you know you can go into shops you can go into shops for men and there'll be some really lovely garments from Northern Europe and sort of very classic long term, long term's not the right word, but very classic sort of clothing that lasts a long time and women's wear seems this quick turn around the fashion coming in and it's spring fashions and it feels. I've got to an age where I can afford to buy things that I can invest in and there feels to be a lot of cheap sort of quick turn-around fashion stuff that's out there which doesn't appeal to me and my style and my age group any more. I go in Oi Polloi for instance and I'll look at the men's shirts and the men's garments in there because I actually think there's a really lovely collection of taste and interest and a look and if you said to me where's a women's shop that does that in Manchester, the nearest I can find is sort of Cos really. And I think for older women, you're either on the third floor of Kendals in sort of something that you really don't want to wear that makes you feel frumpy and older or you have to sort of change that direction a bit yourself. The other people that I sometimes buy from but they're more expensive is Old Town. Old Town again do quite utility wear outfits, they make them in dark denims and khaki and you pick a size and a cloth and then they make up the garment. But again it's the trousers and shirts and things are for men and women and so I quite like that look. I've just discovered a label called Studio Nicholson which is very expensive but again they seem to have a lot of sort of workwear style things. So I don't know whether I always buy menswear but I quite like that slightly androgynous sort of feel.

P – Do you think that, because you're talking about investment pieces here and obviously you've found your style and you're happy with it. You're probably in a place where hopefully occasionally you can afford to invest in something. So do you think there's more value to you, like personal value in a piece of clothing if you've spent more money on it? Or if someone's made it particularly for you like you say with Old Town?

E – I think there's definitely a thing that I started to do and it's partly income and partly do I want things that throw away or do I want things that will last. So for me it's Margaret Howell became something

that every season I'll try to buy one Margaret Howell sort of shirt that's maybe like I don't know a hundred and thirty quid! But those shirts really last and I will wear them in a way that I really enjoy wearing them. I enjoy the feeling of the cut of them and the sort of style of them and I sort of do feel that they're key in my sort of little outfits. But what's odd about your life span is that a lot of those shirts just look exactly, they're collarless shirts and I spent all of my teens wearing men's collarless shirts that I found in jumble sales and they were the old classic beautifully made ones which Howell refers to when she sort of talks about making those shirts. And I would wear them with cuffs rolled back and men's coats and that was my look as an eighteen year old. It was it was going, I think my father used to walk out when I'd arrive home with these bags of men's clothes so there's something inherent that's gone throughout my life that has been about sort of wearing things which have got that sort of very plain look. I also think it's about what suits you, I don't suit pattern as much as I used to. I think my face, I've got quite an animated face and I think pattern interferes with the animation and I look too mad! (Laughs) So occasionally I'll wear something that's a brighter colour, but stripes and navy and simple things suit me more and I think that again is about getting to know yourself and getting to know what you're about and what does work for you. I had to be a mock bride last year in a fashion shoot in a town just showing different, I was the bohemian bride in her fifties. And actually I turned up in Birkenstocks and a Marimekko shirt dress, it was orange and I think the people were a bit freaked out that I was wearing Birkenstocks! But I said of course I'd get married in Birkenstocks! (Laughs) And I think I find it odd when you go to weddings and you're meant to wear sudden this sort of aged costume for a wedding. So you're suddenly meant to buy what a fascinator and you're suddenly meant to buy some sort of odd high heeled thing and I go to weddings in Birkenstocks and Marimekko and people go oh my god you've come like this! And I think it's interesting you have to, people go to these very sort of historic ways of dressing for things. We suddenly come out with eighties sort of frightful outfits and I think people are quite conditioned with what they wear.

P – Do you think that, erm did you used to before you started wearing all these similar clothes. Did you used to amend your clothing when you went to a wedding? Did you used to conform a little bit more?

E – I think occasionally I would wear a dress, erm but I've always worn flats at things like that I think. I think maybe in my late thirties if I went to any weddings I'd maybe dress a bit more, but I think now I feel much more confident in saying no this is yeah. I was always into vintage and vintage dresses, but I think as you get older you think no I'm not even going to try and compete. I was talking to my niece recently because she had to go to a ball for college and she's tall and she was saying I don't want to wear high heels with this short dress! And I said well don't, buy some funky trainers get something you feel comfortable in and redefine the style of the ball, don't try and be like the other girls if that's not the look you want to do. But I do think a lot of younger women follow suit and they follow the path. I think it's also about being comfy and moving and functioning and you live in a city you sort of run through that city. I live off Deansgate now and I find it quite strange going out on a Saturday evening, if you walk along Deansgate there's women who cannot walk and they you know and you sort of think gosh it's like this quite tribal thing of dressing for the Saturday night out and being sexually attractive. And I feel a bit freakish when I walk through them and they'll look at me and be what's she got on?! But I sort of I think practicality and I think my Mother was a practical woman, she was a very large woman and she wore dresses a lot, but she was always very practical in what she wore and her shoes were always practical. And I think that's a message you send out that as well. But that value of clothing, I've always really valued clothing whether it's been something I've spent ten-p, I've got dresses still from jumble sales that I spent ten-p on! I've always dreaded the moment that you wear someone else's clothing, when someone else dresses you. I'd hate to be dressed by someone else, it's very important that I have that sort of control of my look.

P – Yeah, so you talked about stripes and pattern. Is there a particular day? Do you have to feel in the mood to wear that kind of thing?

E – I very rarely wear patterns now or flow, you'll never see me I think I've got one top that's got some flow, floral thing on it. My partner looks at it and goes ugh! (Laughs) But it's got a high neck and everything else I have now seems to be stripes or plain. I bought one spotted t-shirt recently, but yeah and even down to shoes as well. I'll wear Robert's shoes or Robert's brogues or I'll buy men's brogues to wear if I'm not wearing trainers or Birkenstocks so it's sort of a kit there that works for me.



P – So you were talking about there's nothing for older women that don't want to dress, sort of on the third floor of Kendals like you said. Do you think there's a gap there?

E – I think there's a gap for, I mean years ago I used to go to a shop called Arc in Manchester which was on Oldham Street and he had a lot of European labels and they weren't necessarily work wear but they were much more sort of elegant funky women's clothing. And I think so many women of my age go to Cos, you know there is the Cos woman! (Laughs) Because if you're not buying, to me it is quite interesting trying to find what labels accommodate your look and I think Cos has filled a market of a practical look which is quite minimal and quite restrained in its appearance. I think yeah, I think that's probably the only shop I'll go into in this city. You think there's loads of shops in this city, but apart from that and a couple of vintage shops that's the only places I'll buy clothing. So I think there's a massive market. I'd love to set up the, you know the female equivalent of Oi Polloi and actually have things which are much more sort of functional and utilitarian and have got a sort of very different feel. It's bizarre you know you go in Harvey Nichols and Selfridges and really it still seems to be addressing a market which is for, sorry to sort of condition people, but it seems to be you know a Cheshire set who might be going out on Saturday night for drinks in 20 Stories. Then like it's a sort of glamorous rich look whereas that purposeful sort of look I think that is why some people are going to sort of more menswear.

P – So you've said about practical as well. So what aspects is it of men's clothing that you think make it more practical or that sort of style of clothing?

E – That sort of style. I think it's I mean I think it's about being able to just be, you know you move around a city, walk around a lot. The work I do is teaching art and design so you're sort of sometimes in dirtier areas or and I ride a bike! It's that ease of being able to use things. What's odd is I started wearing trousers more when I lost weight, because when I was a certain size I didn't feel comfortable in trousers I felt that they were too revealing on me. I think I dropped a stone and felt comfier in trousers, but you know I'd quite happily wear a funky men's suit for work! And I think that's what I try and do, I try and create that look. I think it's about day to night isn't it. I don't feel I have to go home and get changed for something I feel like I have the look that continues throughout the day. And I like wearing stripes a lot because there's something about I don't know combining stripes and having some sort of energy that they've sort of given out. I'm a bit partial for multi stripes in different layers! But I don't know if that answers you question?

P – Do you think that's something to do with your job? I mean do you notice that people around you are also dressing in a similar way or in a way that doesn't necessarily conform.

E – Maybe. I think there's an arts look. I think people will stop me who don't know me and say you must work in the arts. I think there's that costume. I think that's part of your look that you're saying I want to create a sort of assembly of a costume that says I am creative or, so I think if you put me in any menswear I wouldn't be happy. I specifically choose things which I feel connected to a way I want to look. It was interesting seeing the photographs of the other people in your project because I was thinking oh right! Oh I don't wear things like that! And I was sort of aware that maybe I mix it a bit more with some womenswear that quite utilitarian, whereas some of the people you're working with are absolutely wearing very purposeful things all the time.

P – Yeah. I wanted that though, I wanted a mix of people. So you kind of like, I feel like you shy away from the frivolity of kind of feminine clothing?

E – Yeah. I flirted with that for a while! There was a point in life where I had a fantastic Miu Miu silk dress, my breasts were on show to the world and I remember walking through town once and feeling like the bees knees because I felt very confident. I think that was in my early forties and I remember buying this dress and thinking sod it I'm going to wear it! I think my age, I think I'm very sensitive to your age and a way that you present yourself and so I would never wear that dress now out. I might wear it indoors. But again I think that is to do with your body shape changing and your vision of yourself changing. My perception of myself is different, I'm in a relationship, I feel older, I feel I don't want to expose my flesh as much and I want to be perceived as someone who has a style but isn't trying to come in, ah I'm trying to use my language carefully. I don't feel like I have to give out a sexual signal anymore, which maybe in my thirties and forties I felt a bit more that I needed to and now I'm not interested in a way. So I feel more independent and that frivolity and that sort of. I still like to be frivolous in a sense

of clashing colours occasionally or wearing something that's odd or that's got a weird collar or something that mixes in an odd way. But I like to feel that I'm not wasting time in the morning worrying about oh do I look like this or do I look like that. I like the fun of it and I like the fun of playing with different layers and colours and stripes and I'll sometimes wear one jet black, as I am today I've got one navy onto another navy onto another navy! I think that makes me look more focused and makes me look more in control of myself in a way.

P – Yeah. So you were talking about exposing skin. Is that something you completely avoid now or would you? Is there ever a time when you would?

E – I still have the holiday wear and I'll still if it's a hot day I'll wear a t-shirt, but I don't tend to wear things that are very, are shorter or revealing now. I'll still be the first person to put something short sleeved on on a day, but I'm much more aware of I'm almost more confident about my body but I'm more aware of my body aging and changing and that in order to make that styled you use clothing to do that and I think, I don't know whether everyone does that as well as they might. And I think that's always been something that even as a young woman, I was never the cute girl with the cute legs and the cute look, so I used clothing as a way of saying I can look like this. Whether that was wearing vintage clothing as a woman growing up or men's shirts, it was about putting style over the predicted look of how you were meant to look. I've never been someone who's wanted to wear short skirts because I've always looked at my legs and thought no! I look better with it like this or I look better, so I spend probably quite a lot of time thinking oh that won't work. I'm sort of quite critical of a sort of look, but think that's because you're trying to also have a certain demeanour about the way you're seen and a certain discretion about the way you're seen. I'll wear something that's very loud and very noticeable, but it will often make sure it covers varicose veins and that it covers the cleavage and the tops of my arms and things have got a little bit more of cover all because I think that's dressing for your age as well. Which is why, women can dress whatever they want but I feel more confident if I'm not exposing certain parts of me.

P – You seen very aware of the best way to dress your body for how you want to come across. So you're not just going to blindly follow fashion.

E – Yeah I think that's the problem with fashion is that so many people buy it. They buy what's there because they feel like they should wear it, whereas I think that learning about how your body works and looks better. I could look bloody awful! I know I could look bloody awful if someone dressed me in a different way! But you are art directing your own look to a certain extent, so I am very aware of the clothing I buy. It's probably, yeah I said to someone the other day your treat in the week is gin and someone else's treat is cars and mine would be clothing, because I will buy things that I feel suit me and convey a look. And probably, that's probably my biggest luxury spend that and haircuts is my biggest luxury spend. Erm, does that answer?

P – Yeah! So you were saying that you've had surgery, so you don't want to show that I presume you've got a bit of a dip there?

E – Yeah.

P – So do you think when you were younger you would have said, sod it I'm just going to do that? I'm going to wear it or would you not feel the need to do that?

E – I think I've always had my own thing about what I want to wear, I think I always have. I think right through from being, my Mum, she's dead now but my Mum says that when I was five I would want things that match or things that looked a certain way. And there are pictures of me going for a day in the countryside as a five year old and everyone in the family is wear khakis and they're all wearing sort of cagoules and I'm wearing blue and white stripes little trews with a sort of button up neck little top on. So and I can see myself in all the vintage clothing that I bought when I was going to jumble sales, it always had a look. I wore a huge man's Harris tweed coat from the ages of sixteen to twenty and I shortened it myself and it was this huge big draped tweed coat, because I liked the way that that created a more individual look. So I think I've always been interested in the clothing that's Sue Platt wear. I think as a younger person I would have probably been a bit more daring in revealing myself or certainly with dresses and tops and knowing I had a cleavage. I think there was a point on my late thirties and early forties where I definitely enjoyed having a cleavage. Someone in a women's clothing

shop Adolfo Domínguez told me to go and buy a Wonderbra and I had this Wonderbra and I wore it! It was a fantastic sort of period of life being very sort of sexually dressed. But the surgery removes that from you. Weirdly, if you'd have asked me to be topless in those days I'd have said no no I can't do that! Whereas weirdly, since having surgery on my breast I feel very differently about my breasts. I feel that they have been through an experience and I went to the hospital and said do you want to photograph my breasts! (Laughs) So that other people can see them so that they can understand what the surgery does. And I think then you feel much more, It's much more about the logic of your body and much more about survival and much more about. It's less about them being, about your body fully being sexualised it's more about the age you take. I remember talking to my partner and saying oh you know you can leave me if you want as long as you're my friend you know, but I'm going to have to have this operation. And he was like you know, do you not remember the Walter Benjamin quote about women and scars and that's why I love you and that your breasts aren't the thing that makes you sexual. I think again it's a growing up thing isn't it? I think you learn a lot after you're forty about who you are as a woman which maybe in my twenties and thirties I was always dressing for, dressing for Sue but also dressing to sort of look as best as I could! Whereas I came out today and I actually said to Robert, do I look a bit of a mess today?! And he said no you're wearing the stuff you wear every day but.

P – Is that because you were coming here?!

E – No it wasn't actually! I didn't even double think about dressing for this actually! I just remembered thinking, we've got a mirror suddenly in the flat and I thought oh here I am in all these layers of navy! Maybe I should take a bit more time make a bit of an effort, but then I just thought oh just be easy with yourself! More time to do other stuff.

P – Yeah. Just throw things on! So you were talking about sexualisation of bodies. So now you've had the surgery on your breast you feel less sexualised and they've sort of taken on a new meaning almost.

E - Yeah. I think that's as well to do with oestrogen not being in me as much. I feel a massive release, I feel like as a younger woman you're hampered, I personally feel less hampered, less sort of oh driven by the need to feel sexualised. I feel much more released now that I don't have to, I don't feel that that's a sort of part of me as much and I don't feel it then defines my day. So it's an odd release for me because I thought it would be terrible and I've spoken to younger women who've said ohhhh has the menopause made you feel like this! It's not that you suddenly feel like bland or non-sexual it's just, you just feel it in a different way. Maybe, it's interesting I lived on my own for 25 years and I now live with a man and maybe I feel more secure, maybe part of it's to do with that as well. But I certainly feel, I don't sort of sit and examine myself and think about how I can change myself as much as I probably used to.

P – So since you were, you say after your forties you felt less of the need to be sexual so, obviously you've reflected that in the way you dress. So do you feel like that's because people are looking less?

E – I think, it's interesting, I'll probably conflict what I've just said. I think in my early forties, I think I felt a need to make a real effort, I was newly single and I was wanting to impress and I think that's when I dressed like I was going to a wedding every day. I think as I got into my late forties and my fifties and certainly in the period of time since the breast cancer, I feel that's changed my attitude and I feel. In that time I've been in a relationship in that time I've gone into menopause and so I feel much more independent about the style I have rather than it having to attract someone in a room. I don't feel that I have to walk into a space and feel in competition with other women, I feel I can just be me. Whereas I think I was always comparing myself to other women before maybe I was about forty-eight or something, I felt like there was always this sort of comparison going on. The relief maybe is that you don't feel that, I don't feel I have to go oh! She's thinner than me! Or she's looking prettier than me! Or she's, I sort of just feel like I've been there done that! And I'm released from it now and I think that is the nicer thing about growing older. I don't feel as hampered by it, I don't feel it's a burden anymore.

I'm trying not to be too contrary because you see these different parts in your life and times where when you're single and you're making that effort, there's sometimes a very different liberal feeling to how you feel when you are comfortable with yourself and not having to sort of put a signal out there. But I often wonder if I was single now, whether I'd probably just dress like this.

P – Yeah I was going to say that.

P – (Laughs) I've got a question, do you think you style yourself differently when you wear men's clothing. But I don't think it applies to you so much?

E – I think sometimes if I've worn something that's purely a man's, like I have a man's suit at home, but when I've put that on I feel I walk in a slightly different way and I feel more of an assurance if I put a man's jacket on or something with bigger shoulders or something and I feel. I've got an old cord jacket that belonged to a male friend of mine and when I put that on I feel I have sort of more presence because it's shape is different it feels, it's got more sort of structure to it. So I feel a bit more like I walk down the streets like differently. But I think most of the clothes I have are either geared at androgynous or women's clothes that are a bit utilitarian.

P – So you were talking about the men's jacket that makes you stand up straighter. Do you think you carry yourself differently depending on what you're wearing?

E – Yeah I do, I think if I'm wearing brogues and a man's jacket I sometimes think you have to, you have to hang it better, because you have to walk to almost hold the structure of those clothes. I think yeah, there's maybe a confidence about just. I know with that cord jacket it's got quite heavy shoulders, it's quite wide shoulders and I know I feel that I occupy more space with it so therefore I have to hold it slightly.

P – Would you wear that on a particular occasion? Would you think oh I'll wear that because it'll make me feel a bit?

E – Maybe. I'm trying to think when I have worn it and when I've felt, if I felt that I needed more reassurance. I wouldn't really know whether. I think it does make me feel more assured when I'm wearing that. There is something, but I think that's also to do with the fact that I know the jacket belonged to a very close friend and it's the one bit of clothing I kept after he died. So it's like there's also something to do with the memory of the association with the person I knew who wore it. So I feel like I wear that when I want a bit of Glen's protection and I feel I wear it for him. There's still a bit of a note in the pocket from him and I sort of feel, Oh I'm wearing Glen's jacket today and people say oh that's a nice jacket and I'll say Oh its Glen's! (Laughs) So I think it's not necessarily the way it looks maybe for me, it's maybe the way I'm also inhabiting a man's outfit that I cared about and that I sort of sense I'm wearing it for him. So maybe that's why I walk a bit differently.

P – Do you think when you wear men's clothing, so you say that when you go to a wedding you might wear Birkenstocks and an orange dress?

E – Yeah, I've got an orange Marimekko dress.

P – So would you still wear, because you wear bright lipstick quite a lot.

E – Yeah I always wear lipstick.

P – Would you do the same thing? Or would you tone down the other things?

E – No I'll always wear lipstick and have bleached hair! (Laughs) My Hair's greying now and we're going into more of a white look, but I've sort of. Haircuts and lipstick I feel are also another part of my definition of myself and I think that's the bit that I play up a bit more in a feminine way. It comes down to that question we were saying about patterns and clothing, it is that I feel I can't wear red lipstick and my hair being a bit eccentric or a bit sort of, well sometimes I'll quiff it up and I want those to be statements. I've got red nail varnish on today! I like that sort of thing of playing that girlishness, but contrasting it to that slightly androgynous way of dressing. But if you gave it. You'd never see me without makeup really and it will just be lipstick. I don't like wearing eye makeup as well as lipstick. I don't like putting mascara on and lipstick and eyebrows! It's almost like ingredients to a cake I think, you've got to have the bits that make it look interesting and then the bits that are sort of the general structure and I like playing with the balance of that. I think a lot of people think fashion and style is about what you've bought or putting it all on at once. I think style is about proportions, I think it's about looking at your proportions of your body the length of things and what you take out. I don't think I'm a connoisseur of it (Laughs), but I would love to go and take other women to find clothes because I quite like looking at shapes you create that go in connection with your body shape. I think often women wonder whether it suits them. I often interrupt people in changing rooms because someone will be

trying to get into the size that they think they are, you know they'll be a size ten. I quite like trying a range of sizes on when I try things on, because I think sometimes you can get something that is a smaller size or sometimes it has to be four times bigger and it looks better because it's bigger. And I think women again are trained to have this, oh I've got to get in a size ten, I've got to get in a size twelve! If a size sixteen looks better on you then enjoy it and I think we're terribly prescribed by this sizing system, myself included! You know! I've gone into places and said ooh god I'm now in size sixteen! But if sixteen suits me better then go for it! And you often get assistants in clothing shops saying oh I'd try the smaller size, you don't need it that big and I think no it looks better like this, it looks better when it drapes. So I think that's where you have to mould fashion and style for your own sense of self and not to copy what's in the magazine.

P – So you're talking about proportions. Do you like to play with proportions? Like to do with your body and to do with tops and bottoms?

E – Yeah I like. I know what areas I will avoid in proportion, so I will avoid over knee. So if I'm buying skirts and things they will always be, or trousers. I quite like trousers that are a bit half mast, because I think I quite like having a bit of ankle and I know that's in style at the moment, but I've always quite liked having a bit of ankle on show! I've got thin wrists, so I'll often wear things that are sort of cut so that I've got more space to show that bit of my arm. And I don't know whether I sit there and mathematically do that but I've just got used to that. I've got loads of coats that are sort of three quarter length because I've got quite bony arms and I quite like talking with my hands, so I don't like things that are coming too far over my wrists. I like that fact that you know sometimes I'll tuck things in but often I like things that drape over. I think I try and avoid that very costume that a lot of fifty-odd year old women wear which is the sort of leggings and the longer tunic dress thing, because I think that I know why they do it and it's a bit of a cover all, I think that can sort of look a bit middle aged and frumpy so. I quite like playing with whether a shirt is bigger on you or snigger on you and what shape you are making.

P – Do you try new styles? So you say you like to dress other people and suggest what you think they should wear. So do you do that to yourself? Do you sometimes just go and think I'm just going to try things?

E – Yeah yeah. I mean if you ask anyone who knows me, you know I will quite happily potter around places and try things on. I think it was a very good friend years ago and it was when I first had a very bad varicose vein and she made me try some things on in DKNY in the nineties! I didn't have that much money but she sort of made me try a gold short dress on and this long blue skirt on and all these extreme shapes. I find I do it with my niece now, I'll say try it on and try this on as well because until you try several things on you don't know which is the thing that works with you. Which is the thing that fits you? Which is the thing you feel confident in? And I think it's about how you then walk out of the changing room and how you actually feel in that item and if it gives you a confidence you can't wait to put it on. So I think that idea of trying things and trying different sorts of shapes helps you understand what does suit you and I think it's also fun! I think that's a bit of theatrical-ness in me that I still quite like going and trying stuff and thinking oh god! I look awful in that! (Laughs) Yeah I still have that sort of slightly obsessed interest in seeing what works and what doesn't. And that relationship with ourselves and our mirror and how we see ourselves I think is still very much a part of my life. I still have to balance things a lot, I'm not careless about what I wear, but the kit I have to wear I know sort of suits me.

P – So you're saying you try different things on so is it easy or difficult to tell when something's on a hanger if it's going to fit you or suit you?

E – Yeah I'll normally know what attracts me, I'll normally know. I've got a very clear vision, I've always had a very clear hand to touch sort of thing on a rail and I think this comes from training in jumble sales where you've got a mass of clothes and you just put your hand in and think what's that! So I'll know what's something that I like the look of, I'll be able to pick things out. If I'm not sure I'll get something else to try on to see how that feels. I've got to an age now where I only buy things if I truly know that I want to wear them that night or that day and if I'm not going to wear it immediately I know it's a bad spend. My friend Ian says I'm quite good now at sort of just saying no I don't need that, that isn't going to be something. Whereas there's a reliance on what I know will restock the look that I like.

P – Yeah sort of feed into your current wardrobe.

E – Yeah I bought another striped t-shirt the other week and I just thought do I need it and I thought I know I need to replenish some of the blue and white striped t-shirts that I've got so that's been, you know it's almost like it's not a waste of money because you know it's replenishing. So I quite like knowing that you're doing that.

P – So you were talking about fabrics and what attracts you. So what do you go for?

E – Blue, blue's and navy's are definite. I quite like odd, the only pattern I'll sometimes bring in is some very odd socks or something like that. I wear a lot of stripy socks, but I occasionally will buy some very expensive socks I think it's Bonsoir or something and I occasionally have to find them online but they do some quite individual socks. I quite like a good sock! I yeah, I just it's always up to the neck it's always simple straight shapes. It's never really got a ruffle or it might have a puff sleeve! I quite like a puff sleeve and that's from days of liking, when I was in my twenties I had a lot of nineteen forties dresses and I always suited them, my shape suited them. So I'll always find things. I like buttons, I like things that button up so I'm not very zippy. I don't like scoops, I don't do drawstrings. So there's almost, it's almost like what food do you like! You know when you go shopping and you know which bits of the supermarket you always go in and I think I can look at clothes and go it's that and that and I'll know it's me. I don't really like, it's only in the last few years I've started to buy things that other people might have. From a long time of wearing vintage things, I used to be very worried that people would be wearing the same things as me. The Cos situation, I still worry a bit when people are wearing the same clothing. I liked that idea that it was individual and that's why I bought all the vintage things, or second hand as they used to be called! (Laughs)

P – (Laughs)

E – I liked to know that no one else had it, no one else had it so therefore it was for me. I hate borrowing anyone's clothes. I've borrowed Rob's clothes a bit and I wear Glen's jacket but I don't like the idea of borrowing other women's clothes, I like it to be mine and I'm quite bad at lending my clothes to women. I have some women friends who float their wardrobes around each other, to me it's like no that's my thing and my look. Even if it's from a store that's got twenty possible stores that you could buy it from I still like to know that it's my combination of what I've chosen. I'm quite precious about that, I don't get clothes sharing.

P – You've put a lot of investment, time and thought into that.

E – Yeah and I get slightly irritated, and I've done it to other people, because I'll say where's that coat from? Then I've gone and bought the coat! (Laughs) And I think oh my god you've just done the thing that you really hate people doing and of recent years when people have asked where I've got things I've started to be a little, its confession time! I've started to feel a bit like I don't want to say, because I'm aware that because I've bought things much more from online companies and things, I'm sort of still quite precious about it being oh that's where I get my jackets! There's a couple of people I trust in that, a couple of people I'll let them know! (Laughs) There's a few people where I think I don't want everyone to be wearing the same sort of look. It's very hard in an art school because people, there's a look there's a look to arts staff. There's a look to female arts staff so, but I don't like anyone getting too close to my whole look. You can have one element of it!

P - (Laughs) So you talked about the puff sleeve and you talked about some frilly things. So do you see those as being very feminine? What do you see as being very feminine?

E – I think for me puffed sleeve shirts I quite like because I think they give, they remind me of forties and Bette Davis in films and sort of having a strength to the way you might sit and stand. But when I've got things like frills or I've got a lot of ornament on things or ruffles I feel they make me look like I'm in drag if I wear those things. I feel that I just look like someone in drag. I feel I look more feminine if you put me in something that's more androgynous and simple. I feel my face and my features and my body look more feminine in those things. Whereas if you put me in something very feminine and I'm thinking the old waterfall neckline and a sort of dress that fits in and then has sort of swathes around the bottom with and some high heels, I will feel like someone in drag. I will feel wrong and I won't be happy, and I very much associate being happy in your clothing to being happy as an individual. I would lose my confidence completely. Again, when you're teaching it's like a performance so that thing that you come

in with is about what you're hopefully saying to young women. You're saying dress like, be like this, be confident. Don't be interfered with by having to adjust your tights or I don't know, make sure that your dress is ironed! (Laughs) I don't know maybe I want a practicality for women.

P – It's good that you want to portray that kind of look, because womenswear can be problematic.

E – The emergence of shirt dresses I think is really interesting because I think there are actually a lot of women find them quite, so being able to wear a dress but you've actually, you've got something that is simplistic and is purposeful. I quite like that mode of shirt dress I think, that's quite interesting.

P – Would you wear that, a shirt dress?

E – Yeah I'd wear a shirt dress, I'd wear a shirt dress. Any dresses I have now seem to be sort of either very simple and plain or they're shirt like. The thing I wear for a wedding is like a long shirt.

P – And everything kind of skims your body.

E – It skims yeah, there's nothing hugging. There's no stretch fabrics, there's no jersey and I've not got much jersey, I've got no jersey dresses. I've got no dresses that cross over you know those Diane Von whatever dresses!

P – Yeah.

E – I can't do those! Yeah. I just find them too, too sort of revealing and too. It's a funny thing to try and pinpoint what it is. I just feel, I feel very middle aged when I wear those sorts of things as well and I feel younger if you put me in a t-shirt and some trousers. I feel more flexible, I just I don't want the restraint of something that's close fitting and overly sort of feminine.

P – So you said that you used to wear dresses sort of when you were single and early forties, but then you were talking just now about dresses being problematic. So were the dresses that you used to wear less problematic in terms of like the wrap dress?

E – I think they were often based on quite retro styles. I think I have often chosen things which are almost a homage to nineteen fifties, nineteen forties, so dresses I have owned have always had that sort of look to them. Again why I wore a lot of forties dresses is because they would be below the knee but they would have buttons up at the back and they would have a sort of close neck, and they would be fitted to a point but they would be quite erm. I've got a big thing about Bette Davis in *Now Voyager* and I think you know if you sort of said wear womenswear that would be what I would choose. Again its button up blouses and skirts that sort of are nipped in but quite straight and I've never been the person to really wear the spilt skirt or the and again that's covering up legs! I probably get quite jealous of young women who have had great legs but I always never felt confident in that so I've always worn things that cover that area.

P – I feel like it's the frivolity in feminine clothing that you're avoiding because the forties is, although it's kind of feminine it's quite modest, quite demure.

E – And its still women having a job, it's women learning to look after themselves, it's women not dressing in a tantalising way. They're going out there to try to earn their own living, it's in the war. They're using glamour to a certain extent and they're using makeup and hair to deliver a femininity, but they're dressing for a purpose and a practicality and they're often funding themselves because they've either lost their husbands or they're not married. I mean *Now Voyager* was a nineteen forties film that I look to all the time and Bette Davis in that, there is a point of reveal. She's the frumpy woman at the start and she reveals herself in some high heels and a skirt, but it's a film I always look to because it's a film about a woman who doesn't have to get married and have children to be successful at the end of the day. She finds her own voice and she finds her own job and she finds her own sort of sense of self. So I've always looked to that make up in my own life. I'm often curious about, you know my Mother wore patterned dresses and always dresses because she was usually a size twenty two or a size twenty four, but she would always wear them with men's sandals or odd women's flat sandals and wore a little bit of makeup or a little bit of lipstick and a little bit of powder. I wasn't brought up in a feminine household that said oh you know, do skincare or shave your legs or be! I was brought up in a much more practical way and I think that comes through as I've grown up, it's a liberation about growing up!

P – It's the values that have been embedded when you were younger I suppose.

E – Yeah are not to do with, yeah my Mum would dress up for things but there wasn't an overly, you know we were taught to get ready in five minutes! (Laughs)

P – Yeah! (Laughs)

E - (Laughs) You know! I was the youngest with two elder brothers, you had to be ready in five minutes and I can still be ready in five minutes! I have women friends who I completely respect but they will need time to get ready in the morning and I've never had that level of interest in spending and inordinate amount of time. I can spend a lot of time in front of the mirror working out what to wear the night before! I can enjoy playing with clothes in the mirror and dressing up, putting a piece of music on and thinking I'm this today! I like that costume, that invention of clothing. I have a lot of, I'm trying to think what I have I have a lot of shirts, women's blouses nineteen forties women's blouses which again button up! They're probably pale pink and they're probably my one bit of very sort of feminine clothing, but I quite like them because they're of an age and they're of an age of women and summertime and silk and satin. That's probably as sort of feminine as I get in clothing.

P – Do you wear them?

E – I still wear those yes. I'd forgotten about them because it's winter but I do still wear those. If I go to a vintage fair that would be something I'll look for, partly because the palette of their colour suits me and also because they remind me of nineteen forties films because there's something about that button up blouse look.

P – What would you wear them with?

E – I'd wear them with trousers. I used to wear them with sort of older skirts and erm, but yeah I'll wear them with trousers.

P – A bit of a balance there?

E – Yeah I quite like that notion of you know, the Katherine Hepburn's of this world with sort of almost wonderful trousers and a blouse. I quite like that look. Maybe also part of my look is, not that I'm wearing today but I also grew up watching old movies so there's a bit of that about femininity coming through from characters in films. Whereas maybe I wasn't being exposed to that in my own family, but maybe through watching movies with women maybe Mildred Pierce and Joan Crawford and Katherine Hepburn and Bette Davis are people that I've looked to as being feminine but with a controlled sort of career element to the way they dress.

P – Do you feel like you're coming at it from a feminist angle?

E – Yeah I think so, I think so. Yeah.

P – And also you talked about glamour. I think you have that. You have the bleached blonde hair, you have the lipstick and the nails, so you're doing that thing that you said with the hair and the nails, but then not necessarily.

E – But playing it down with everything else. I sort of, I think I'm a believer that if you put it all out it looks too much! Whereas you know I think if you're, it's a bit like pattern. I don't think you can have an animated sort of face with lipstick on and then wear loads of pattern and then wear high heels and then wear! I think you can look too much, so I think it's yeah my sexualising of it is allowing myself the frivolity of red nail polish, red lipstick and a bit of foundation, but I don't want to put it all out there. I think then there's no room for your own smile and your own character and your own sort of geekiness to come through.

P- I'm just going to ask you some questions about masculinity and femininity, but I want you to think of them in terms of sort of traits, people traits rather than clothing. So can you describe masculinity? Do you think you can?! It's quite tricky.

E – It is tricky isn't it! I associate masculine. It's odd knowing the men I know and then what I think of as masculine clothing. That's a very difficult question. I think of masculinity as being something that is almost terribly practical or like almost an enforced. I get confused because I think of people trying to be



masculine on Deansgate on a Saturday night and their masculinity seems to be about wearing things which are almost sexualising themselves as men. Whereas and they're almost trying a look which will impress women, whereas the men I know who dress will dress in a quirky dignified way that allows their style. I'm getting muddled. I know a lot of men who dress stylishly, but I don't know whether they dress masculine.

P – Do you think that masculinity still has a relevance? Do you think it's relevant?

E – I don't know whether I've ever thought about it.

P – Thinking about masculinity and femininity together and the way that possibly in the past there's been a division.

E – Separate.

P – Do you think it's still relevant?

E – I'll have to think about that one a bit more. I think, I think I can talk about femininity more than masculinity. I don't know whether I use the word masculinity much in my day to day life, so maybe that's indicative of me feeling that it doesn't really exist in my demographic of people I mix with don't think about it. Whereas, sorry to condition people but I'm sure if you spoke to half of the women on Deansgate on a Saturday night they would be referring to men's masculine dress as something that impresses them as looking at a man. The sort of sexualisation of clothing and the way we look, I don't know whether I'm an expert on. I think there's much more acceptance for women to dress in a more masculine way and I think there's more acceptance for men to dress in a more feminine way and allow more flamboyancy with how they dress. I think especially with all the route of transgender and the way those things are sort of emerging. I think equally that means that some men who want to be very macho will dress in a certain sort of, I'm definitely not you know, camp or I'm not transgender or I'm not. I think that about my partner, my partner will wear stripy knitted ties and is quite artistic and fanciful. He'll wear workwear and he'll wear pink in shirts if he wants but it's not a tradition of a suit and tie and I'm a man walking in a room. It's much more permeable and much more softer. Struggling with that question.

P – It's hard. So you said permeable, so do you think that's the way that masculinity and femininity are a bit more now?

E – I think it, yes but I think it depends on the demographic of person. I'm surrounded by arts people and I think maybe that's why I'm finding the question difficult because I think in a world of arts and creativity, there's much more flamboyancy or there's much more androgyny or there's much more willingness to be individual in what you might wear. I think if I went to another city or another town or another work place. I was watching someone actually walking to work the other day and I was thinking wow, do people still wear that sort of outfit to go to work in? It was a young woman and she was wearing her high heels and a split skirt suit and a blouse unbuttoned to the cleavage and I don't see people like that much. I saw some men in MMU the other day and they looked wrong in MMU, well they were in the art school and they looked wrong because they were all wearing grey suits and white shirts and grey ties. It was like watching the FBI coming in or something! It was like no one dresses like this in my environment so who are you? You're like imposters! So I suppose if I had to think of the ultimate of masculinity in a traditional sense, maybe I'd think of those grey suited people who are like this anonymous businessman look. Whereas the demographic I mix with, mixes stuff and tries things and is creative in the way they look and I think that is very different from maybe an area that I'm not as familiar with. You're in your own bubble and I think maybe that's why I don't know much about that masculinity in dress because I don't encounter it in the men I know.

P – So there's more, would you say a gender fluidity in the kind of world we're in here?

E – Yeah I'm sure. A male friend of mine was walking through a part of the university the other day in the business school and he said for the first time he felt slightly threatened in the university, because the way he was dressed was art school lecturer. You know he wears a beret sometimes he has the stripy t-shirts on and he's wearing some little trainers and he said he went through an area that was very, he's heterosexual, but he went through an area that was very was much more, maybe that's what we're talking about that more masculine sort of. And he felt they were looking at him, as if well who are

you dressed like that? So I don't whether it's about masculinity and femininity I think it's about demographics and I think it's about the sort of the style you're brought up with and the connections you have mainly, rather than it being about man and woman. It's the bubble you happen to inhabit. Does that make sense?

P - Yeah it does. So in terms of femininity, masculinity and femininity. Where would you put yourself? Do you think you're masculine and feminine?

E - I think I'm masculine and feminine! I think I'm feminine, I think I'm feminine but with a practical style about me I think. I've never felt masculine. I've never felt that I want to wear androgynous clothes because I want to be seen as a man. I've felt that by wearing more masculine clothes or men's clothes or androgynous clothes, it actually makes me feel more feminine. I feel more girlish in a sense when I wear things that make me feel confident and wearing the very feminine outfit would make me feel ill at ease with myself. So it's getting that balance isn't it? It's getting the balance were the thing you feel comfortable in exposes the best of your sexuality, it exposes the best of your presence and your confidence. As a woman I don't want to be judged purely in a way of is she attractive and sexual, I want to be judged as Sue who is creative or who has something to say or can be funny or can be animated or talks with her hands or rides a bicycle or is able to move through this city with confidence. I would hate to feel stifled in the city centre because the clothing I was wearing pre judged me.

P - So do you think that for you, wearing very feminine clothing wouldn't project the right sort of, wouldn't communicate you properly?

E - Yeah I think yeah, I think now yeah. At the period of years I am at the moment I would feel sort of misrepresented. I'd feel misrepresented if someone else dressed me though. I'd feel, I'd feel. And it's not that I'm anti-wearing-a-dress or anti-wearing-women's-clothes at all, it's more to do with a generic sort of feeling of style. I think I'm finding the questions difficult because I don't see myself as masculine or feminine or either way. I feel like I'm a woman and I'll wear the things that suit me best. When I'm looking at things to buy I don't necessarily think oh that's a bit more masculine or that's, I just look at what talks to me and what I think will suit me. Whereas there might be some people who very much feel much more assured because when they are wearing a man's clothing or they feel less sexually judged through that, I don't know. I don't know.

P - I wanted to ask you some questions about gender identity, which I think we've discussed a little bit. I've got this little scale that I drew and it's a bit of fun! Where would you think sort of gender identity, not masculinity or femininity. Your gender identity.

E - Oh I'd probably put myself at around six. Yeah, I'm definitely not Barbie, but I'd probably sort of go five to six. Yeah, does that answer it?

P - Yeah. Why do you think?

E - I think in my imagination once I move from, I'm not Barbie and I think I associate that very frilliness and over kempt. I'm imagining two-three-four. Two-three-four are sort of less frivolous but are still in a sort of more manicured way of being. I'm imagining five gets to a nice happy space that is neither one thing nor the other, a mid. I'm pushing myself a bit in six because I sort of suspect if, you know if the choice came whether I was wearing a dress or a man's suit, I'd probably go for the man's suit as a sort of joyous statement, but as long as it suited me. I'd go for the thing that suits me over whether I'd wear the menswear or womenswear. But I'd probably just go mid-range on that, I don't feel one or the other.

P - So kind of where you've put yourself, you're a person. You're just sort of a person in the middle and equal to your male friend who is stood next to you.

E - Yeah and I don't feel that I need to be this and neither do I feel I need to be that, I feel like I'm just happily there as me. And it does come back to that fact of the dialogue of is it menswear or womenswear, I think you wear what suits you and you wear what you feel comfortable in so to me that's absolutely mid-range. I'll mix both and not worry about it.

P - So clearly you're making links, your gender identity is kind of

E - Yeah and I'm not going to go specifically to a menswear department I'll go to all departments and mooch around and find the things and combine the things and so yeah.

P – Good.

E – I'm in the middle.

P – We didn't go through these actually but I don't think we need to.

E – There's me in a dress!

P – Yeah and what's that you've got underneath?

E – It's a shirt from Gap, but again it's a gingham women's shirt from gap but I've brought the neck up higher. Again because I sort of like higher necks so I've got an owl badge on! To connect the neck so I've sort of stapled the collar together!

P – Oh ok!

E – An owl RSPB badge, but again I like eccentric and I like things that are sort of a bit odd about things or making things a bit odd for myself. The dress is a Cos dress it's a Cos pinafore dress which is terribly basic with two big pockets and I really love it because it covers all but sort of you can put things underneath it to make it a bit more eccentric. Erm so yeah.

P – So it probably works well with your idea of your mix and match wardrobe.

E – But I'd be wearing that with flats.

P – Yeah.

E – There I'm wearing some dungarees from Carrier Company. Carrier Company again where I got the jacket that I've got on at the moment and they do a lot of work wear and again they are dungarees that are sold to men and women on the same site. I've just got a white t-shirt underneath which I think will either say Greta Gerwig or Sigourney Weaver underneath. They're t-shirts from Girls On Top Tees, who celebrate women in film, whether they're directors. I've got an Agnes Varda one, Agnes Varda's in her eighties possibly ninety now, she's a French director, Belgian director! I've got a Sigourney Weaver one, I've got an Isabel Hopper one I've got a Greta Gerwig one and again it comes down to my love of cinema and leading ladies or women being independent in their careers. I think they've started selling them at Home now but again! I'm really irritated that they've started selling them at Home!

P – Stole it from you!

E – Yeah, I quite like the idea that they're sort of celebrating great women.

P – Yeah.

E – So it comes down to that sort of feminist sort of role. The other thing is and you know, I bought those and I remember going to a friend's mother's funeral and when we were growing up I remember going round to their house and in I don't know nineteen eighty probably. It was his mother's funeral and I remember saying that she was probably one of the first women I saw to wear workwear and wear androgynous clothing. As I was growing up she would wear dungarees and be wearing men's work jackets and fisherman's smocks. Again it's those funny things that you get exposed to and you think oh that looks cool, that looks different.

P – It's like eccentric artist mum isn't it.

E – Again yeah the dungarees yeah, they were my birthday present and I just enjoy the fact that you don't have to bother about anything! (Laughs)

P – Yeah they're great!

E – Oh what am I wearing there? I know I've got a fisherman's smock on there and the fisherman's smock is actually something, I've had that since I was in my early twenties. It's a navy smock shop fisherman's smock and it's in extra-large! It's huge on me but I really love wearing it as an overall, over the top of things and it just, it feels. I feel like I'm in a French film as a child when I wear it even though I'm a fifty-three year old woman! But I like that fact that it's just very spacious and just connects and I

wear that often with some corduroy second hand sort of culottes that I bought in a second hand shop with tights underneath and trainers.

P – Does it make you feel smaller when you wear something big like that?

E – Yeah that's the other thing. I think it makes me feel more petite when I'm wearing things that are more drapey.

P – Do you think that's why you feel more feminine?

E – Maybe yeah, maybe you've cracked something there. I think I, yeah I'm wearing brogues there.

P – Yeah there they are.

E - I was quite overweight in my twenties and as a teenager and I think that's why I wore a lot of vintage things because I couldn't get things that fitted me. I think there's always been an attitude of if I wore something that's bigger and more loose it made me feel like I was covering some of that weight and as I got older and thinner. I've been thinner at times in life, I've felt more sort of, yeah I probably do, I probably feel smaller when I'm wearing something that sort of hangs and then it makes me feel more feminine.

P – You will have quite a lot of space between your body and the garment, such as like with this I've got a lot of space around me.

E – Yeah so you feel smaller, whereas if I'm in something that's tight and revealing I don't feel, I feel more exposed and I feel fatter and therefore I don't feel as feminine.

P – So we're talking about tightness. So if you've got trousers on and they're tight on your waist?

E – Yeah.

P – Can you cope with that?

E – No I wouldn't like trousers that are tight, I always buy things that are slightly bigger in order for them to feel looser, yeah. I don't like anything too tight. That's a good observation that!

P – Why wouldn't you. So say your trousers need to fit around your waist for instance, say that's what we want.

E – These fit around my waist, but I'm actually wearing a shirt that goes over because I don't really, I like the fact that it drapes over rather than it being exposing. I think if I was very slim, I really happily wear tighter things, but because I've always had hips and a bit of a tummy. I feel that there's a flow that goes on with things that sort of drape or are looser or bigger.

P – So that tight feeling, is that uncomfortable? Or how does that feel?

E – It makes me feel more self-conscious if I'm wearing something.

P – Even if you can't see it is what I'm thinking. If it's under your smock and you've got something on that's tight how do you feel just in yourself, not because people are looking?

E – I think if I feel something's very tight it makes me feel fatter and so in my always-aware-of-never-wanting-to-be-fat, I find that things that feel looser feel just feel calmer on me and I feel more. Yeah I don't really like wearing anything that's too tight. I think it's, if you've ever been overweight in life the minute you are overweight and things corrode or rub or are too tight or leave a mark when you take them off are, don't make you feel as beautiful. So I think if you've been in those situations you'll like things that sort of create, it's again it's about proportions it creates the shape and the looseness of things and what shape it makes. Whereas some people will buy things that make them look much smaller, I'll probably buy things that make me look slightly bigger but sort of I'm more relaxed in.

P – So you're more interested in how you feel.

E – Yeah yah. I'm more interested I how I feel and how it looks, I think. I think yeah. It's both, its two things meeting together.

P – Is this the same outfit?

E – It's the same outfit but with this Cos jacket on over the top and two scarves on!

P – It was a two scarf day!

E – It was a two scarf day! This is a Sam Meech knitted scarf.

P – That's lovely.

E – Which he does based on coding of different people. He's done an Alan Churring scarf and he's done ones based on different sorts of people who have done maths and things like that.

P – Oh wow that's really cool! I thought it looked a bit kind of.

E – And the other scarf is oh St James or something, it's stripy I like my stripes. I think that's probably! (Laughs) I've had this Cos padded jacket on probably every day since I bought it! Another thing is about layers and menopausal women, it's only this last year that I've really started to have massive sweats so it's quite good to be able to have things that you can just take off.

P – Strip off.

E – I'm naturally a very cold person, now I've suddenly had a heating system put in me and it's like I have to be able to take things off! You'll sometimes see me all wrapped up, then I'll unwrap everything.

P – Ok I just want to ask you some really quick questions about a photography pilot that I did. So it was to do with clothes on and off the body and the gendering of clothing on and off the body. So the first four, can you tell me if you think the garments were made for a female or a male body.

E – Interesting because I think that's male, but the tie is the thing that's making me think it's more male the black tie. The collar is quite feminine, the colours are quite feminine, but I think it's for a man.

P – Yeah it's a men's dress shirt, it's a Lewin one. Everyone's said about the collar you know! It does look quite, it's a strange shape. Ok this one.

E – I think they are men's trousers and I say that because I think the button flap at the back and the way the pocket is looks a little bit like in my symbolism in my head, it just feels more male.

P – Ok. Do you think that's because you've seen it?

E – I just, you know I just. I think you see less, you see more men's trousers with that pocket detail, erm, but I could be wrong. Oh what's this? Is that a little belt thing? Ah! That bit there makes me feel it could be for women because there's that little belt that pulls in, so that detail makes me think it's probably a woman's pair of trousers but I think this is more male.

P – I see what you're saying. They're men's ones but they're vintage. That's like an adjuster, a size adjuster it's really cool. They kind of come up high here, they're really good.

E – I've got a pair of Toast trousers with a size adjuster at the side. If I was asked I'd say it was women's because of the depth of the scoop, but also the depth of the sleeve space makes me feel that's a man's shirt because women's often don't have such a deep slash at the side.

P – That's a really good observation.

E – So I think if I was going for be all and end all I'd say it was probably men's, but the scoop at the front makes me feel it's more women's.

P – It is men's, but it was longer it was really long so I cut it off.

E – Oh they could be either.

P – Either?

E – Yeah!

P – They're women's. A lot of people have said that the zip's quite high so you can tell it's women's for that. Ok, so on these ones can you tell me which model you think looks more feminine?

E – That's interesting. See I think I'm meant to think that, but I think she looks more feminine because like I actually think she looks better in that outfit than she does.

P – Ok so can you

E – I think she looks more, she's happier in the outfit and she carries the outfit better than this person, she looks better in it so I think she looks more feminine in it because she is carrying it better.

P – Right. So even though the two are wearing the same clothing, they're a similar kind of size height wise, similar sort of bodies ish. But you can see a difference there?

E – I think it's towards her attitude. Her attitude looks comfier in them therefore she looks the more confident woman. Whereas because she's has long hair and she's, you know I'd go for her.

P – Do you think that's a thing where you know say if two people dressed like you and one person wouldn't normally wear that thing, do you think that comes through?

E – I think it's about confidence. I think it's about clothing and confidence for me I think it's to do with when someone shines in something and makes it look good it's often they look more at home and more confident or it suits them better. I don't feel she feels as happy (Laughs), it's probably her outfit! I don't feel she feels as happy. I'm looking at partly their outfits and partly their expressions, she looks like she carries the outfit better therefore I feel she looks more feminine. Does that make sense?

P – Yeah, no it makes a lot of sense. This one.

E – Now that's interesting.

P – So same question. Which one looks more masculine and which looks more feminine? Or which one looks more feminine?! Sorry.

E – It's really hard. I'd still. I still am leaning there and I think it's because in my sort of semiotics, there's something about the fact of what I've been saying about the idea that you look more feminine in some men's things sometimes when you have. I have an association with having shorter hair and sort of having a look that is more androgynous, but you feel more feminine in the men's clothes. So I, I've probably got an aversion to the long hair, but there's almost something about again the clarity of that suiting her more with the short hair, so for me I think she looks more feminine and I think it looks better on her again.

P – So do you think that's, so you say that's to do with.

E – It's to do with the whole look of how she's wearing it. So they're wearing the same sort of trousers, the same shoes but she's, I go to the fact that and it's probably not answering your question but I think she suits it more than the other person therefore I feel she looks more feminine in it.

P – So do you think it kind of brings out the femininity? Is that what you're saying?

E – Yeah. Yeah it's the fact that the masculine element to that clothing makes her seem sort of more feminine in the way she looks, because she sort of carries it in her look. Am I meant to say that?

P – No you're not meant to say anything. I did a pilot with these and it was a survey and I sent it out on email and I asked people to do like a gut reaction and it was this one every time. So I just wanted to follow that up.

E – Its interesting isn't it. Yeah it's really interesting because I yeah. I think for me it's always the equation of does something suit someone and therefore does it bring out the best in them and I think that's the way I shop or I advise people. So for femininity I think it's like how does that person look the best? I think if you said to me you're going out as one of these people today, I'd be thinking I'm feeling more confident as her in that outfit because I actually think she carries it better.

P – That's really interesting.

E – Yeah it is interesting. Do many people get confused by the long hair?

P – Yeah. I asked for a gut reaction you see, like an immediate reaction and obviously it was just a click.

E – There's this association isn't there with long hair and femininity, whereas you know I've not had long hair since I was young but I've always felt like a woman. I've always felt almost that the way you feel with your own haircut is about how you feel not necessarily how it always looks as well so it's. You know I would quite happily have my hair shaved off because I'd love the feeling of sitting in the bath and having no hair! But I sort of know I can't get away with that so much these days because someone might think I've had chemotherapy! So it's a bit like oh you know I don't want to do that! But I actually think there's a clarity about how you feel so I think a lot of this in the discussion is about how you feel in something as well as, and feeling at home in something and feel that you carry something. And that's a very sort of personal thing in a way.

P – Yeah. That's it.

E – That's' it?

P – We're done.

E – Has that been useful or not? Have I been crazy?

P – It's been amazing, really good.

# A FEW GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON SHIRTS.

There are nineteen usual parts to a shirt, which are cut out pretty nearly by the following rough proportions, but as the figures of men differ materially, no exact rule can be laid down.

- 1st. The SKIRT or BODY, which is cut with the two breadths in one piece, and should be long enough to reach from the shoulder to the knee of the wearer.
- 2nd and 3rd. The SLEEVES, which are generally about half the length of the skirt when sewed up, and the breadth the same.
- 4th. The COLLAR, which is the same length as the sleeve.
- 5th and 6th. The WRISTBANDS, each of which is half the length of the collar.
- 7th and 8th. The CUFFS, the length of a sleeve and a quarter.
- 9th and 10th. The SHOULDER-STRAIPS, the same length as the wristbands.
- 11th and 12th. Two SLEEVE-GUSSETS.
- 13th and 14th. Two NECK-GUSSETS.
- 15th and 16th. Two HIP, or SIDE-GUSSETS.
- 17th and 18th. Two WRIST-GUSSETS.
- 19th. One BOSOM-GUSSET.

## EXPLANATION OF MAKING UP SHIRTS.

Double the long piece for the skirt in two, making the front breadth one nail shorter than the back breadth.

Measure the proper distance from the top for the arm-holes, and the proper distance from the bottom for flaps, and put in yins for marks.

The skirt is usually simply sewed up, but it is preferable, especially with gentlemen's shirts, to make a hem the whole length of the skirt, on each side, and then sew up between the arm-holes and flaps, finally, with thick even stitches.

Proceed next to stitch the collar and wristbands. Let the stitching be made about six threads from the edge, and carried all round both the wristbands and collar; taking care not to pass the stitches through both folds of them, at the opening or part, in which the fulness of the sleeve or shirt is to be gathered.

Next prepare the straps by turning them in, and drawing the threads; do the same with the neck and other gussets.

Now sew up the sleeves, putting in the large gussets, the little wrist-gussets and gathering them into the wristbands, to prepare them for putting into the shirts. Then put in the side-gussets, and hem the flaps and bosom of the shirt. These gussets are fixed by sewing them on at the wrong side of the shirt to within a quarter of an inch less than the square, and felling the other side evenly over. The neck gussets are next managed in the same manner, taking care to put the stitched part on the right side.

The shoulder-straps are then doubled in half, and slightly tacked on the middle of the shoulder in the middle; then place each side flat on the shirt, and stitch it in the lines that have been prepared for it.

The bosom is then stitched, and the button-holes made, or if, as in gentlemen's shirts, a piece is let into the front, it must be arranged according to the taste of the wearer.

The lining is now neatly felled on, and the neck gathered, and set into the collar, after which the sleeves are gathered and put in. The bosom-bit may then be sewed in, and when the buttons are put on the shirt is completed.

The skirt is marked about an inch below the left hip or gusset.

## Square-cut shirt. *Workingwoman's Guide 1837*



# GENERAL RULES FOR CUTTING OUT.

"What's best, what's best"  
"But, you say, according to your cloth."

measured by cloth measure.  
 $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches make 1 nail.  
 4 nails — 1 quarter.  
 4 quarters — 1 yard.  
 6 — — 1 English ell.  
 6 — — 1 French ell.

AL JV

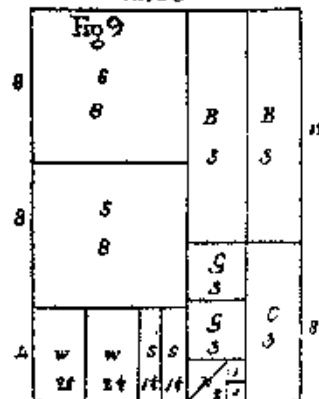
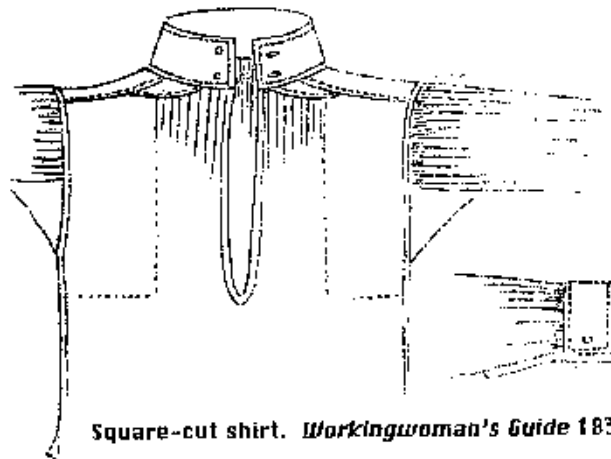


	Fig. 9.
Quantity required for one .....	2.8
Quantity required for six .....	21.1
Proper width of cloth .....	14
Whole length of skirt .....	2.4
Space to leave for shoulders .....	24
The space for the neck will then be .....	4
Slit downwards for breast .....	5
Length of arm-holes .....	5
Slit at the bottom for flaps .....	6
Width of sleeve .....	8
Length down the selvage .....	8
Width of bixlers or linings .....	3
Length down the selvage .....	12
Width of collar .....	3
Length down the selvage .....	6
Width of wristband .....	24
Length down the selvage .....	4
Width of shoulder-strip .....	14
Length down the selvage .....	4
Size of sleeve-gussets .....	3
Size of neck-gussets .....	2
Size of breast-gussets .....	1
Size of thigh-gussets .....	1



## Appendix C. Participant feedback on the final outcomes.

Face-to-face feedback on final outcomes. Participants trying on.



Face-to-face feedback on final outcomes. Participants trying on.



# Practice journal: Philippa Jackson.



*Images - Above left are the women participants in the photoshoot at the end of the journal. Above right, is the Pit Brow women sketch made during the research.*

*Throughout this document, all images are taken or drawn by myself. Some are observations or are my own clothing, some are from exhibitions and where this occurs the exhibition is credited. Historical clothing was photographed whilst working in the archives at:*

The Museum of London, 150 London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN

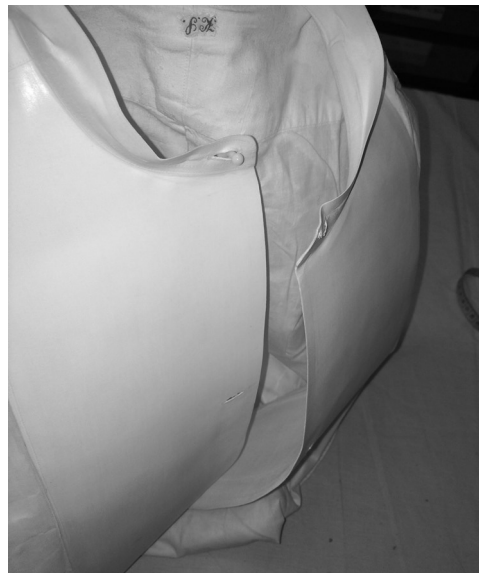
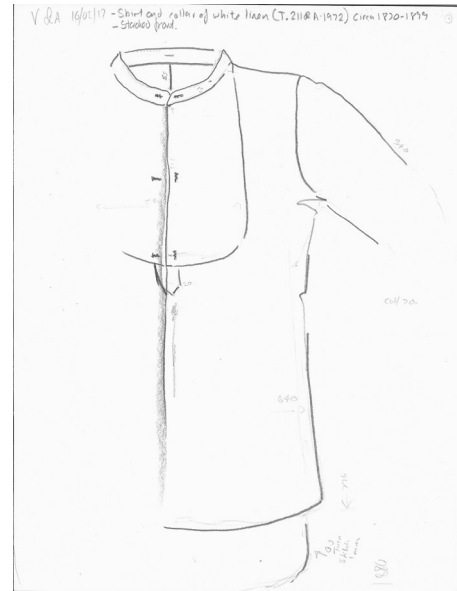
The Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion, Blythe House Archive, 23 Blythe Rd, London W14 0QX

Manchester Art Gallery, the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Rusholme, Manchester M14

## Fieldwork in the archive

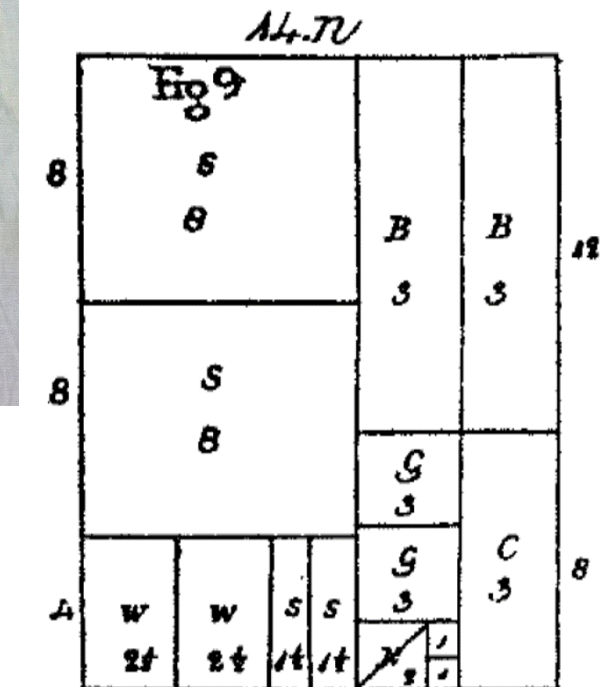
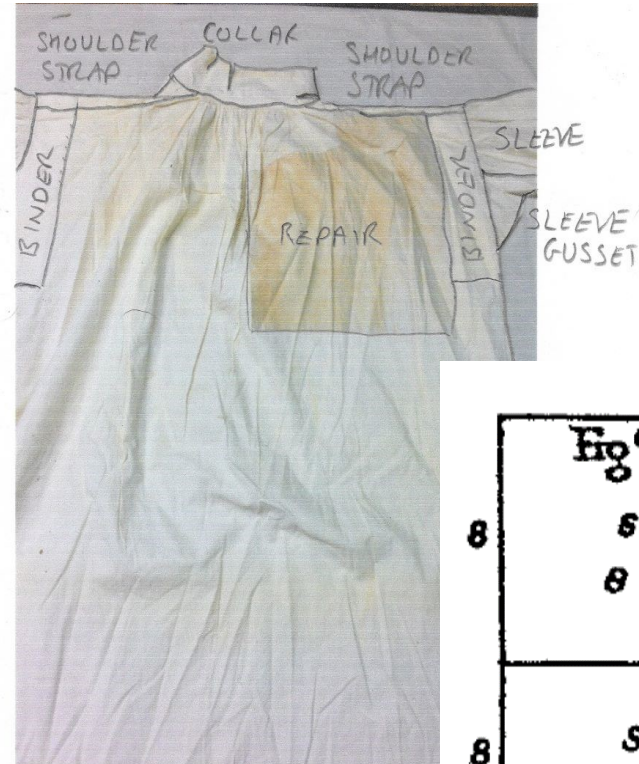
The imagery and this page shows a selection of the most interesting artefacts and details.

*Victorian menswear collection at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester Art Gallery.*



## Breaking down the square cut shirt construction

Squares and rectangles....

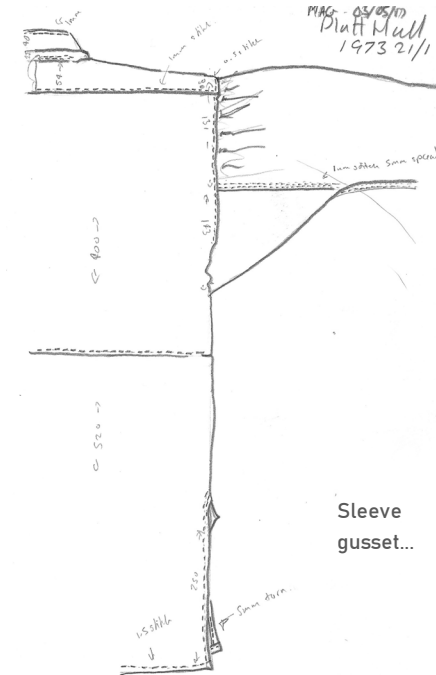
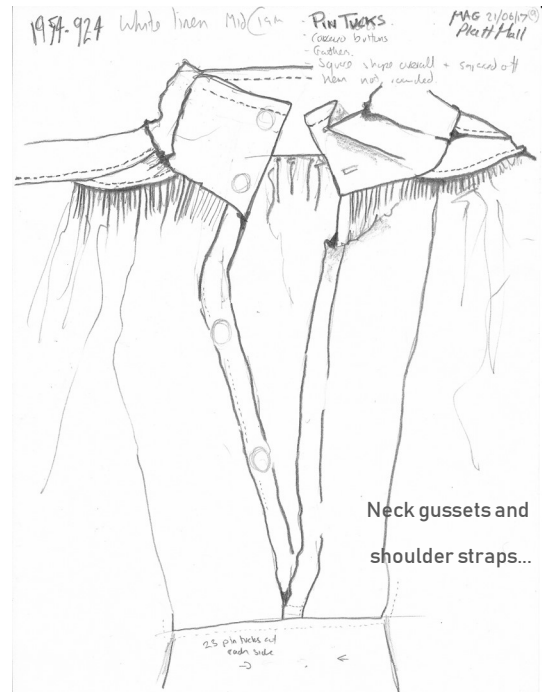
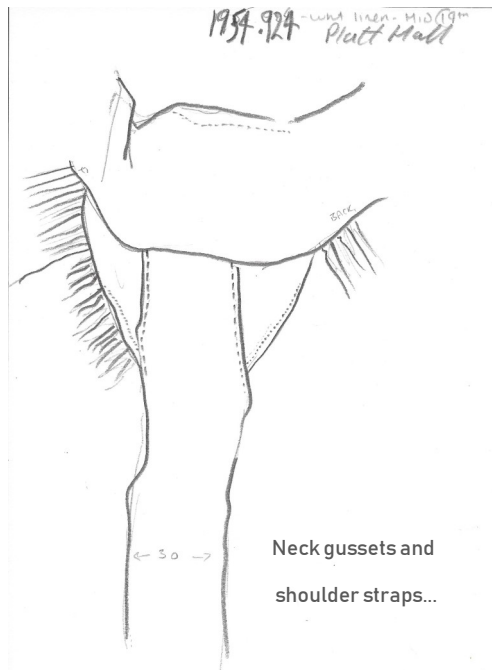


Square cut shirt plan Workingwoman's Guide 1837 cited in (Shep & Cariou, 1999: xxv).



The drafting method found in Shep and Cariou (1999) shows use of the body size with the remaining sections of the garment then proportionally drafted in relation to the body. Sizing isn't specific, the shirt is **OVERSIZED**. The pin tucks here are almost perfect, only almost. I like the idea of imperfection.

*Artefacts from the Victorian menswear collection  
at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester  
Art Gallery.*

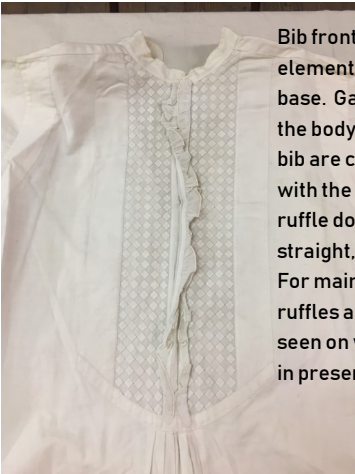


**Working with the imagery.**

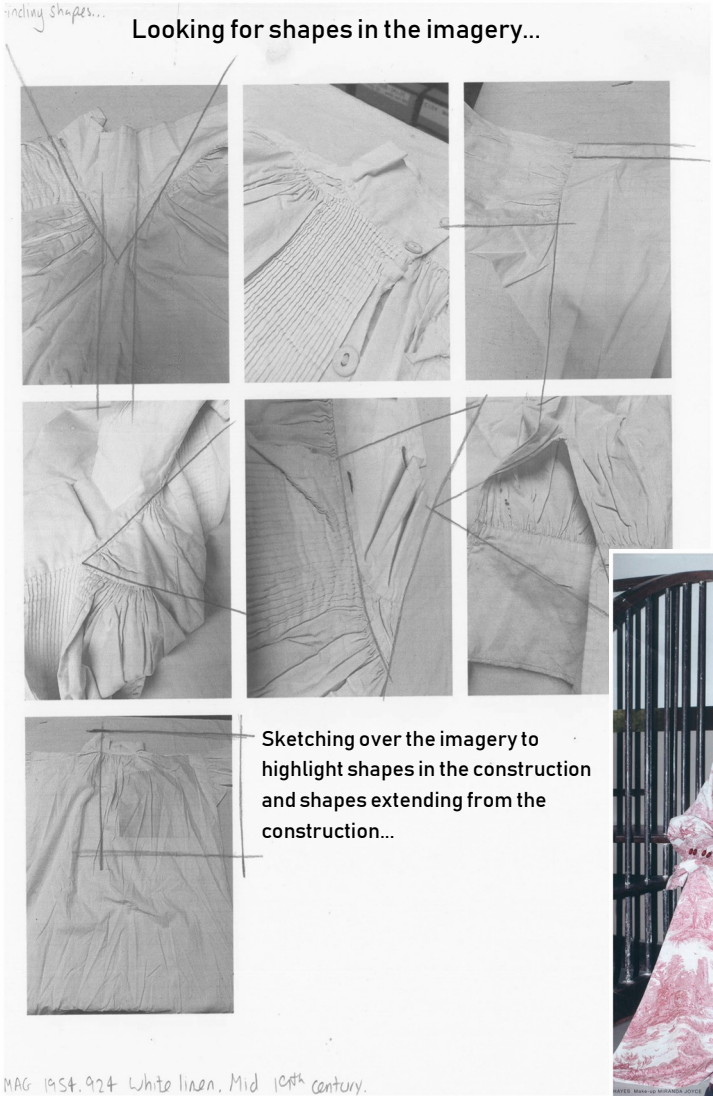
After the focused time in the archive with the artefacts, I am in my studio working on the imagery, looking for shapes and interesting detail, sketching over.

There are lots of 'V' shapes. Shape is found in the construction detail but also in the folds and shapes of the opened out garment as seen on page 7.

*Victorian menswear collection at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester Art Gallery.*



Bib front with linear elements and curved base. Gathers where the body attaches to the bib are compressed as with the linen shirt. The ruffle doesn't sit straight, it meanders. For mainstream trends, ruffles are really only seen on womenswear in present fashion.



MAG 1954. 924 White linen. Mid 19th century.



Dress by Roland Van De Kemp (LOVE, ss16)

Sharp creasing occurring through storage...



Underarm gusset, V shape...



## Working in the archive at Platt Hall, Manchester.

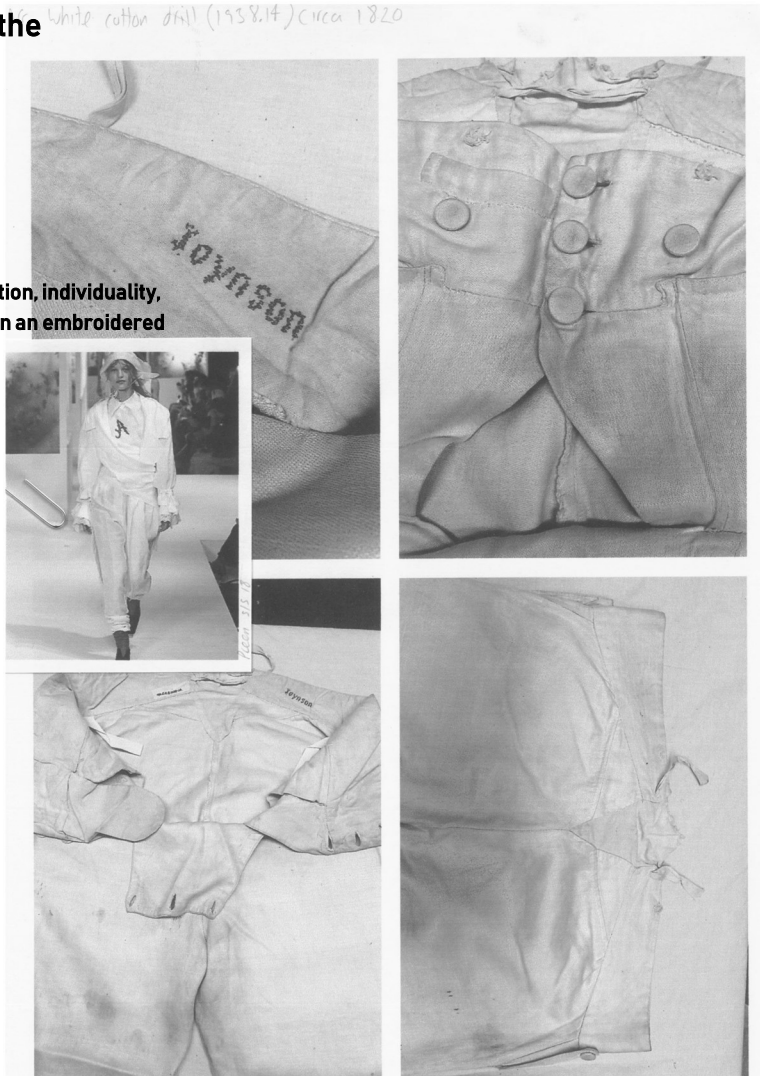
Images of me in the archive were taken by Rosie Gnatiuk for use on the art gallery social media.



## Looking for shapes in the imagery...

### Trousers...

Personalisation, individuality, practicality in an embroidered name...



Construction and fastenings. Interesting shapes are found in opened up garments such as here and the side leg button trousers adjacent.

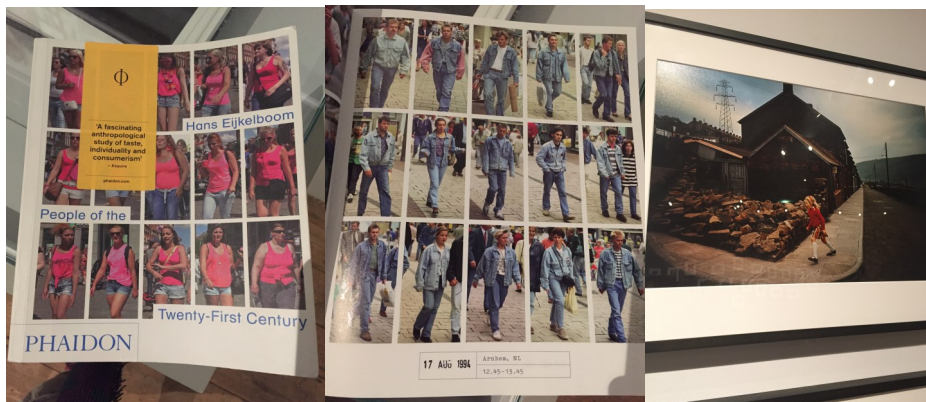


## Photography.

Street photography and candid shots of people in clothes.

### Strange and familiar: Britain as revealed by International photographers. Manchester Art Gallery. Curated by Martin Parr.

The work by Bruce Davidson, below left, caught my eye. I love the way the colour is garishly vivid and yet dark, possibly reflecting the harshness of the realities depicted in the image. This work reminded me of the work of Nan Goldin which is similarly vivid. Both artists work with real life. Hans Eijkelboom's 'People of the Twenty-first Century' was within the exhibit, below right, I have wanted a copy for so long...I still don't have it. The book seems to be a demonstration of consumer culture, and the premise is interesting for my study as a demonstration of how external influences from media and advertising impact on choice and create trends. Also, thinking about how this shows that peoples choices are often not as individual as they might have thought.



Hans Eijkelboom's

Bruce Davidson

### Notebook on Cities and Clothes. (1989) Director: Wim Wenders. Documentary film about Yohji Yamamoto.

I found that the documentary made parallels with my own thinking about clothing. Yamamoto uses the medium of old photographic portraits to think about people and how they wear and use clothes, how bodies and personality interact with the clothing, and thus how they are perceived by the viewer. The images in the film seem to depict people in their ordinary clothing, in a style which mirrors that of street photography. Yamamoto observes a record of people in their clothing, less fashion so much as life in clothes. I find links here to my use of images of pit brow women and the carte' de visite, also the way in which I am drawn to street style photography and thinking about how people embody garments.





## Photography. People in clothes. Gender presentation.

### Switcheroo... Hana Pesut...

- Fashionable couples swapping clothes.
- Matching stance.
- It is interesting that nobody really looks out of place. They seem quite at ease in the clothing.
- This idea for swapping clothing or wearing someone else's clothing is interesting as a method for considering things like, what looks good and why? How do we know what suits someone? What makes clothing look masculine or feminine?
- In 2013 Pesut shot more Switcheroos for the launch of the Meadham Kirchhoff x Topshop collection .



Jackie and Mayumi, image by Hana Pesut.



Javan and Brenna, image by Hana Pesut.

### Changing lives.

#### The 9th annual Man Met PGR Conference.

I made this work as a representation of the beginning of my study. This is one of the reasons why I began. It is the connection between the person and the clothing. It is what the person brings to the clothing in terms of their gender and is a question about whether the clothing or the person controls the gender appearance.

The work is influenced by Hana Pesut's Switcheroo, but differs as it uses two women. Here I hope to gain insights into what the person brings to the clothing in terms of what suits an individual. Also, how a person can be perceived as masculine or feminine because of clothing and how this differs between two women.

The work shows clothing from my wardrobe on myself and my friend. The photo's show that we are quite different looks wise. We fit into similar sized clothing, yet our body types are different; she is curvier than me and has a larger chest; we both have massive shoulders! Surveys sent out to the conference delegates showed that the person/body, brings context to a garment. I am interested in what this means for the women I will interview, as this pilot study suggests that clothing choice is only one of the factors attributed to how someone looks in clothing. It seems that personality, the way one conducts oneself, stance, hair style and colour may also impact on the way someone carries off a look. I want to extend this work to be included within the participant interviews, to further test the finding about people, clothing and context.

*All images on this page where taken by either myself of my friend on my iPhone and I have permission to show my friend in the work.*

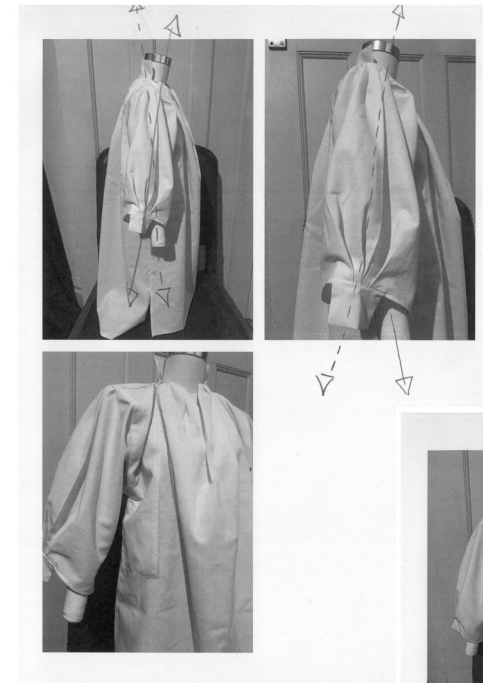
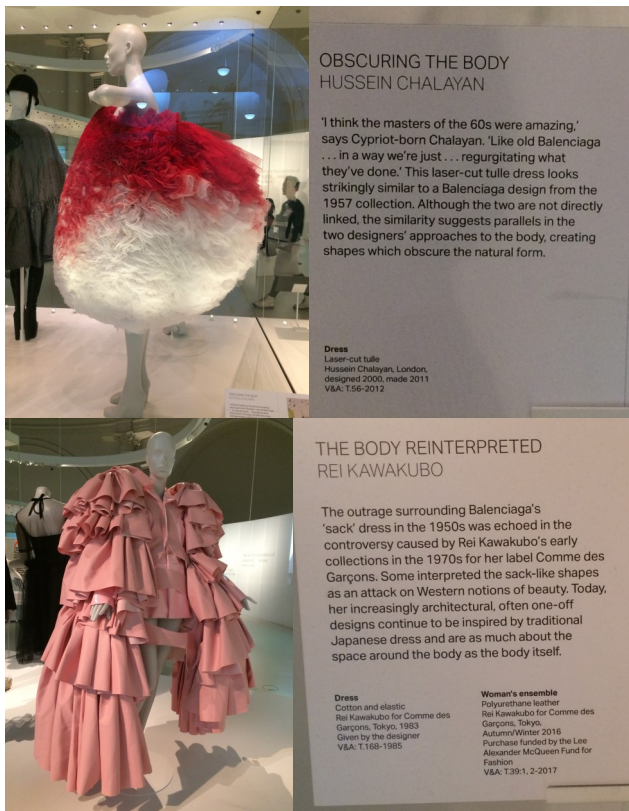


## Connections with volume and working in connection with, but not onto the body shape.

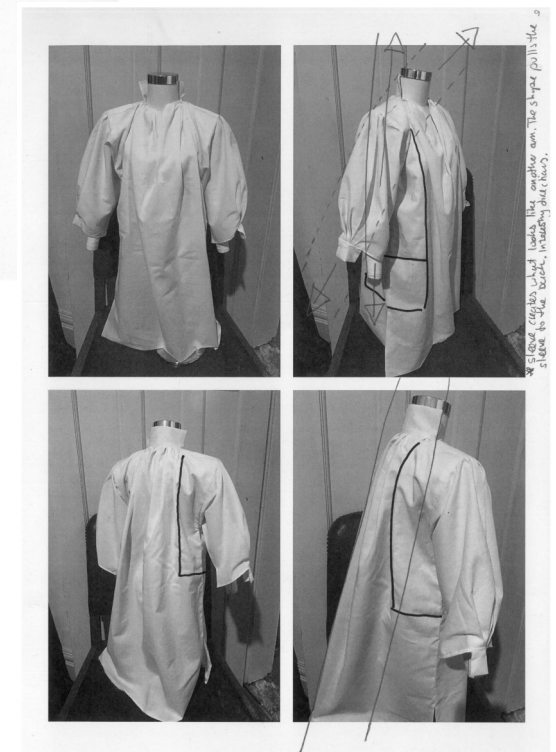
### Balenciaga at the V&A.

Obscuring the body. Balenciaga's sack dress of the late 1950's did not adhere to the current hourglass shape and was thought to be *unsexy*. There was no waist at all.

Thinking about working with the fabric, working to the drape. Letting it hang over the body.



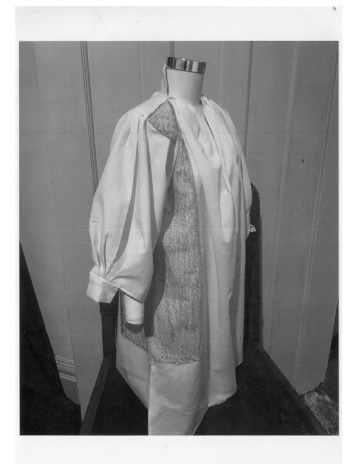
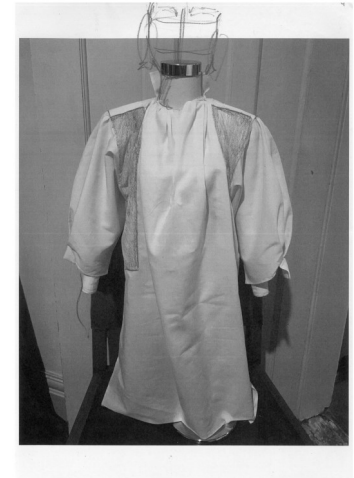
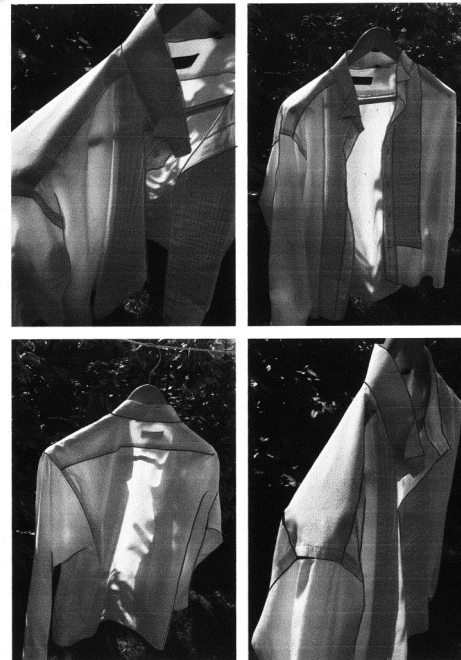
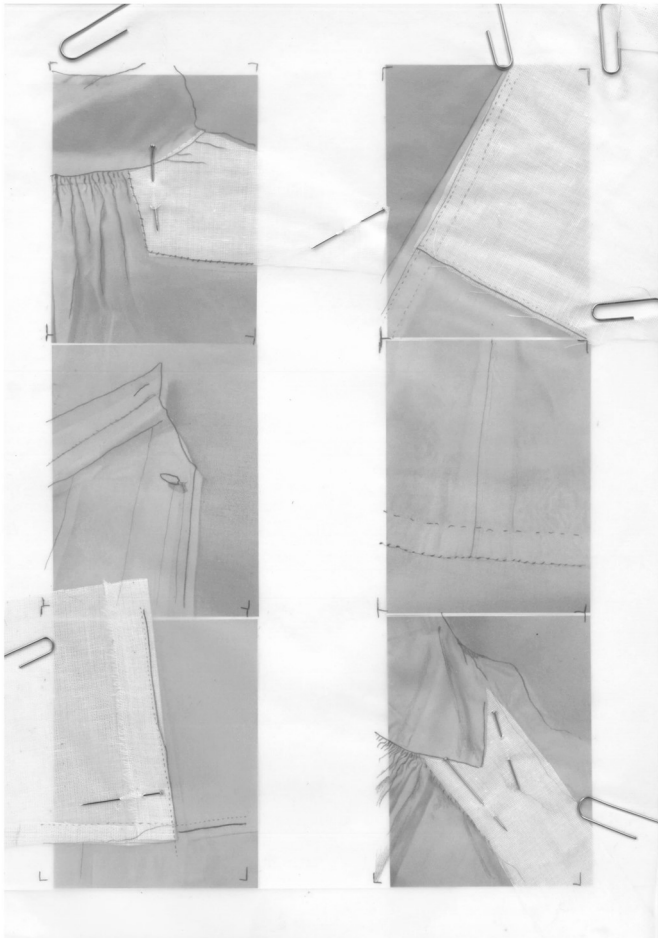
Space. How the shirts hang.





## Translucency and reinforcement.

Thinking about fabrics and combinations of sturdy and sheer. Nev has made me think about structure and heavyweight. Also considering how fabrics can help in creating space between the body, and the garment, which brings a sense of lightness.



## Experimenting with layers and translucency.

Working the idea through by trying on layers of garments and using light to highlight dense and translucent areas.

My thinking has been developing in terms of this idea of the reinforcement behind the garment. I have moved on to thinking about layering, and how a combination of a thin under trouser and a wide thicker over trouser, could offer an interchangeable wardrobe solution for these women. This offers opportunity to try 'different' combinations depending on mood or occasion, add or remove for weather changes, add an additional method for putting an outfit together. I wore the



Martine Rose. See through trousers, Winter 2018.



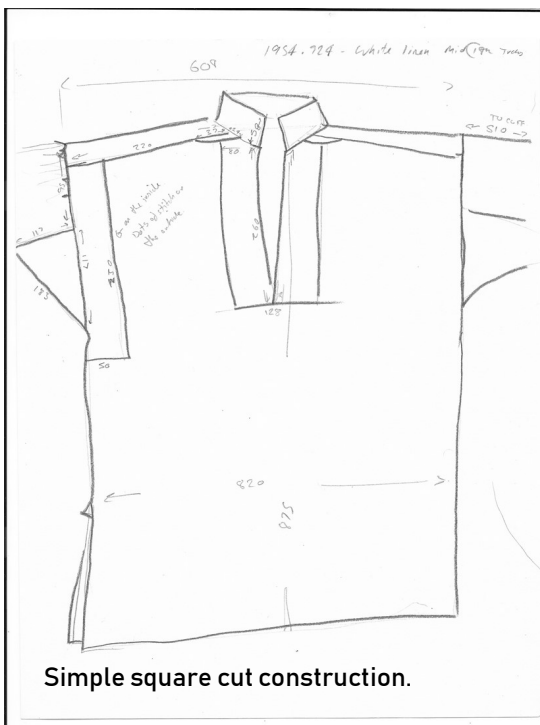
Testing layering with different lengths of top. Thinking about proportion, cropping; layers versus revealing. Do the layers offset the revealing?



**Strand one flat cutting.**

Mandarin shirt.

**Making the basic shirt. I wanted to recreate the simple square cut idea visually in a basic flat cut pattern. The square CUT is simple, but the look of the shirt is quite complex and gathers create fussiness. This shirt, cut from a man's basic body block, will include the binders of the square shirt, to bring the utility look. This is a test of the two types of making.**

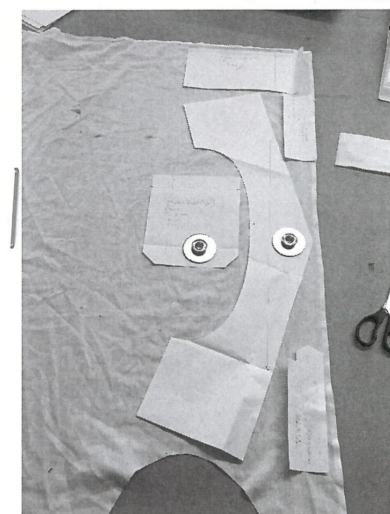
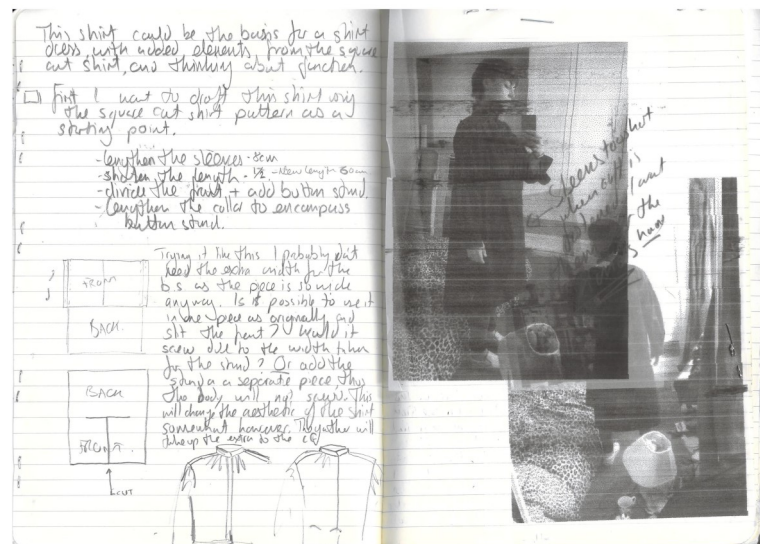


## Responsive making.

Thinking whilst I make and changing and adapting what I do. Working in the final fabric.

Top image, cutting the binder. As for the square cut process, my binder is cut in one piece. In flat cutting, this is wasteful, as shown. I therefore used the off cut section to cut the pocket, and to position other small pieces in the gaps. The waste is a concern.

Bottom image, mid stage. The binders hang off the garment.





## Volume and transparency.

**Nothing Abandoned.** Exhibited at Paradise studio's in Salford. Past work.

Working with a decommissioned parachute to make work demonstrating re-purpose. Ideas for the work were minute to minute. I did not plan the piece, but worked with the fabric, thinking and making as I went. I thought about the past purpose, but also of the space the work would be displayed. The translucency of the fabric was interesting and made me think about light travelling through. The seaming created more dense areas, where light could not pass.

Some shapes were taken from patterns made during my MA Creative Cut; these are originated from double scale men's shirt patterns....image bottom right.



**Thinking about volume in connection with my past work.** Links to past work can personalise outcomes, such that the practitioner is within the work, even when it is so closely associated to the participants and their requirements. It could be said that as a woman who wears menswear, I am somewhat a part of this group, but as an

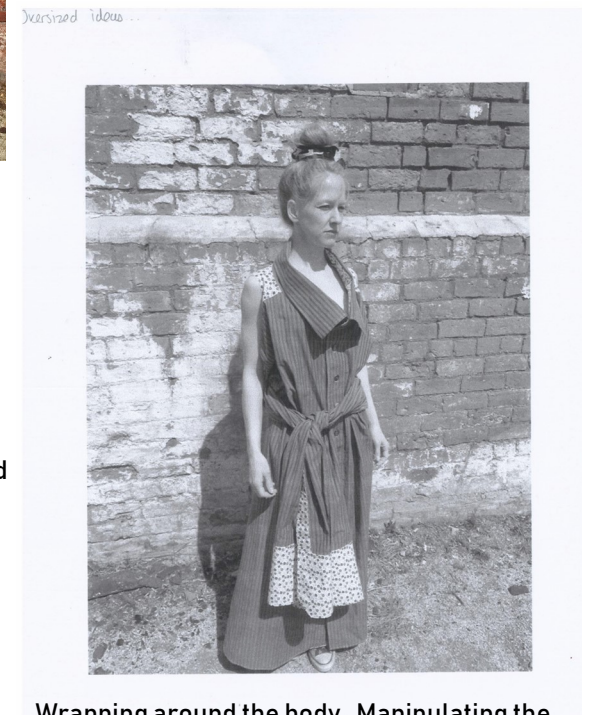


individual, like each woman involved. Here links are made to work about 'nothing abandoned' where I made a garment based suspended installation from a decommissioned parachute. Links can be made to this study when thinking about light passing through fabric and the visibility of construction details.

Suppressing volume by drawing it to the body.



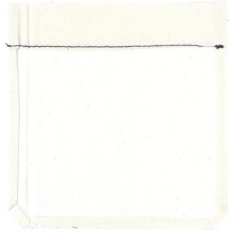
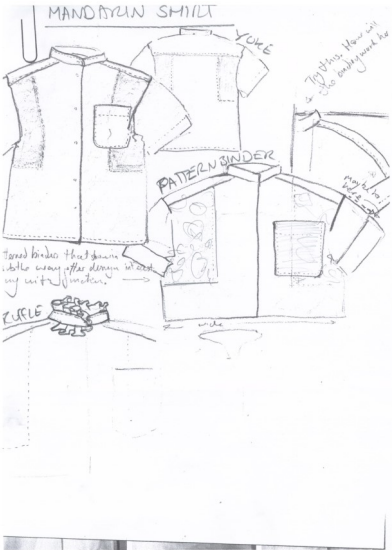
Adjustment.  
Hooking up,  
attaching and  
adapting the  
garment.



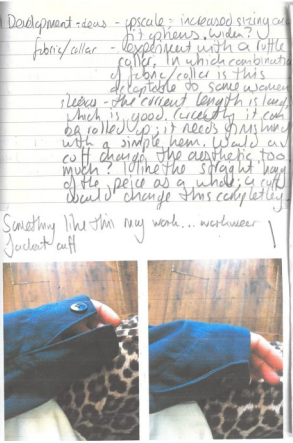
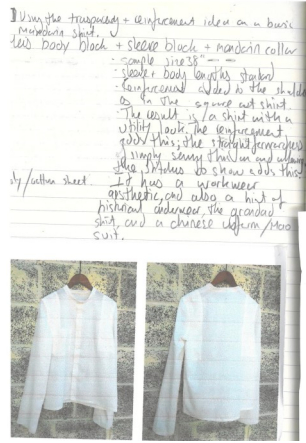
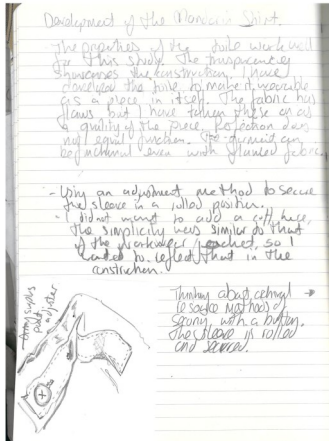
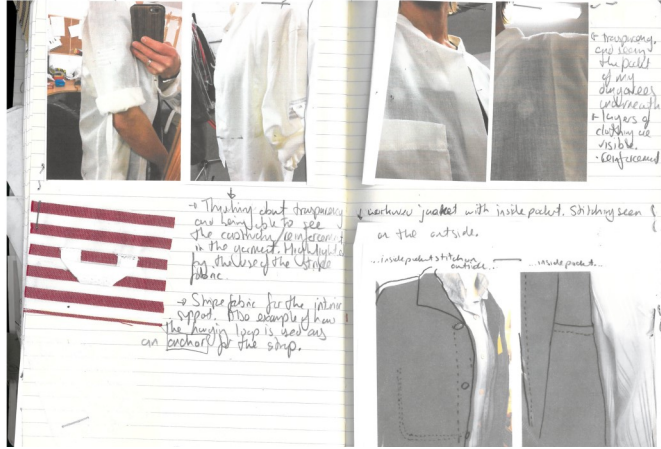
Wrapping around the body. Manipulating the garment to suit the body.

# Strand 1: Flat cutting. Working on details. Adjustments.

Pocket placement and type of pockets. Consideration of contrast fabrics and stitch, and how these impact aesthetics. Ways to adjust the sleeves were thought through with reference to the Pit Brow women and garment manipulation.



Considered pocket placement.





**Strand 1: Flat cutting.**

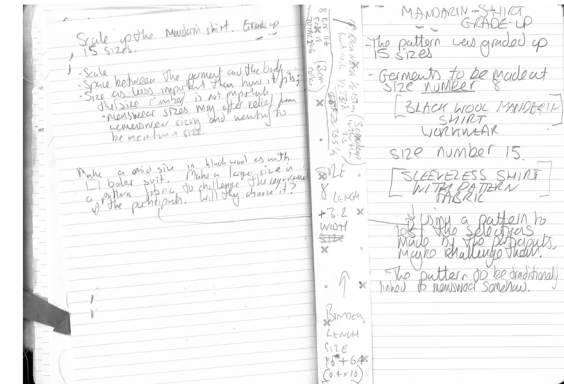
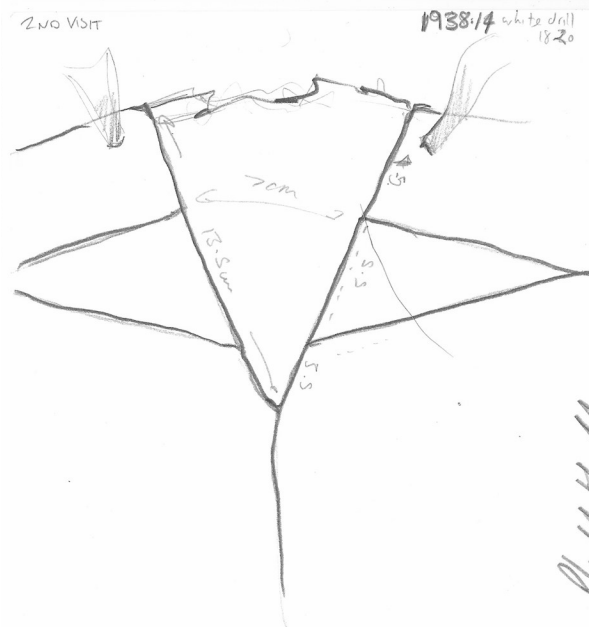
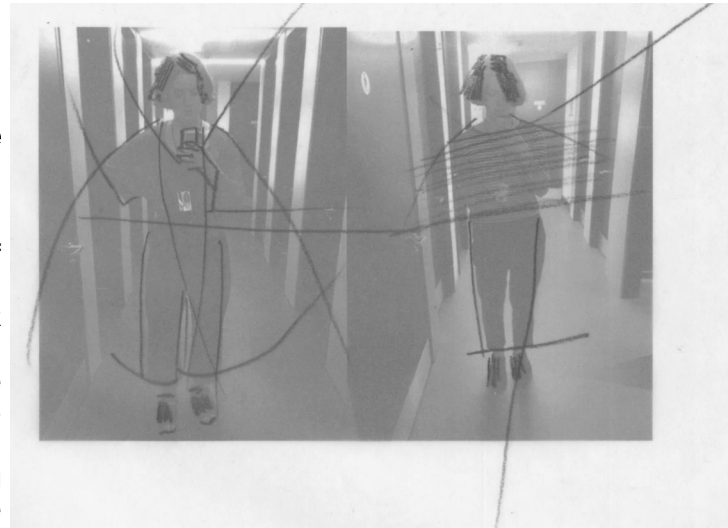
**Mandarin worker shirt: sizer number 8.**

**Patterned sleeveless voluminous shirt: size number 15.**

I graded up the mandarin shirt by 15 sizes, which I numbered 1-15. I wanted to test the impact of upscaling the garment. Thinking about volume and space between the body and garment. The black worker shirt is a mid size (my number 8), it is a basic. I wouldn't usually make a basic, but I think the participants will like it for it's simplicity, space inside, light fabric. Using the sleeveless shirt, I am

testing a balance of revealing through the cut of sleeve (see image below) and volume. Will added coverage in the body, make it ok to see the side bra? Jessica felt the side bra/body is not sexualised. Will well-being be achieved or be perceived as achievable through this sleeveless garment?

The shapes that widen to the bottom describe how the sleeveless shirt will look. Removing the sleeves will create the effect of narrowness at the shoulders and wider at the hips. This may be good or bad for the participants. Either way, coverage will happen.



**Mandarin Shirt, Black Worker Shirt and Sleeveless Mandarin Shirt.**

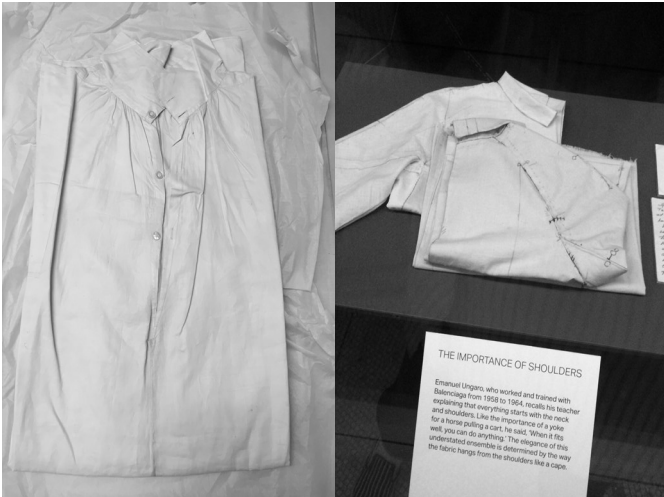


Space in the shape, very deep armhole that will reveal the side body. Finished with fully enclosed seams. The binders are contrast fabric. It looks so different to the other work. I'm intrigued as to whether it will be liked.



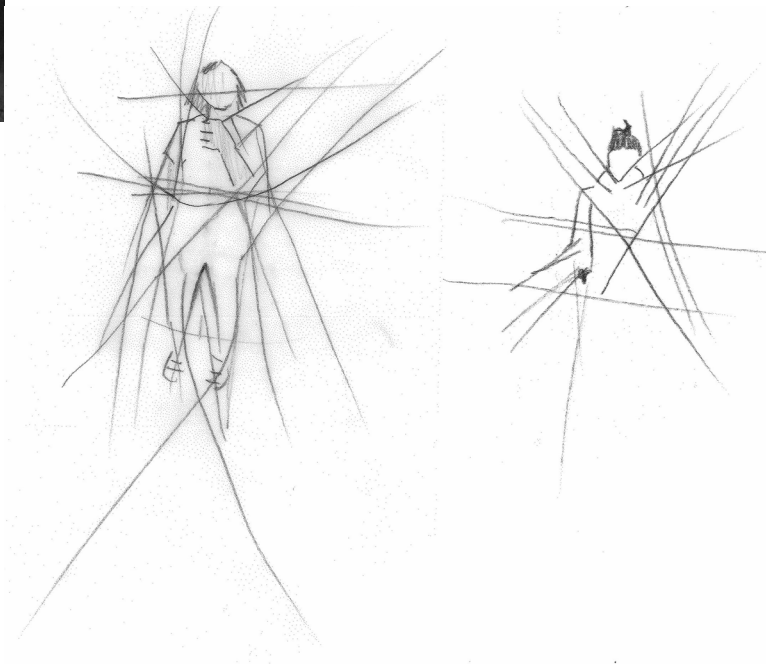
## Strand 2: Square cut for upper body.

Folded garments. Folding and creasing in the archive. Old looking and worn garments. Archive - linen square cut shirt from MAG 1952.219.



## Making haphazard tucks.

lack of uniformity could be suitable for this study when thinking about a practical response which deals with excess fabric.

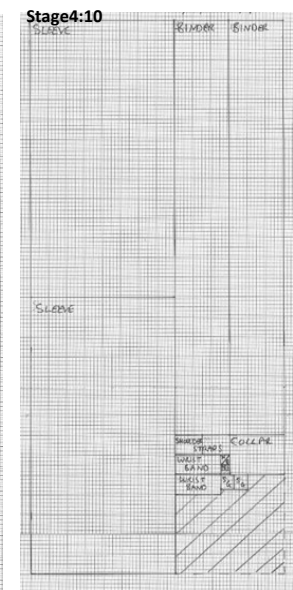
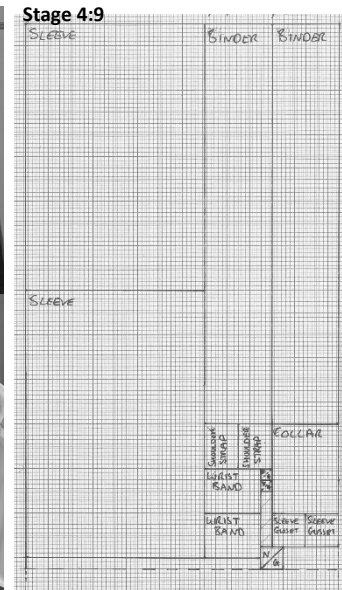
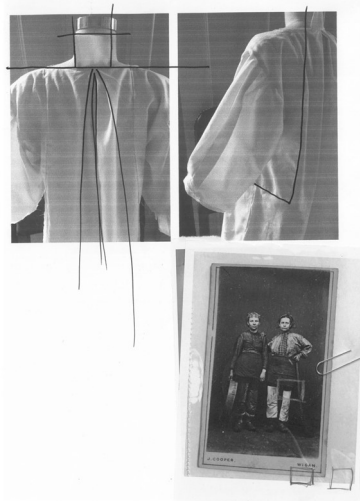
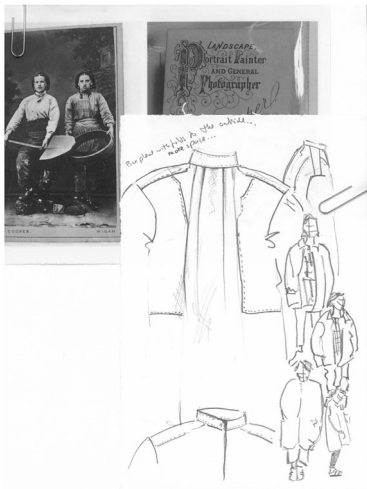


The haphazard tucks are shown to make connections with the drawn over images of some of the participants. Nev is shown here. This working in the haphazard is freeing. It was developed through the intuitive ideas of Responsive Making. Gathers are pressed as they fall and then sewn close to the folded edge. It is completely random and unique every time. Everyone's garment will be different so the maker is imprinted into the work. The participants like the different in clothing.



## Strand 2. The square mandarin shirt and ways to suppress volume.

The first toile (below) is a standard square shirt but shortened. Shortening combined with gathering and this stiff fabric, caused the kick-out at hip length. This produced ideas about suppressing the volume somehow. I wanted to work 'with' the fabric. I applied haphazard tucks to this toile (see previous page) to the front and the back. The front worked well but the back became too flat. Therefore I investigated further solutions using the square cut



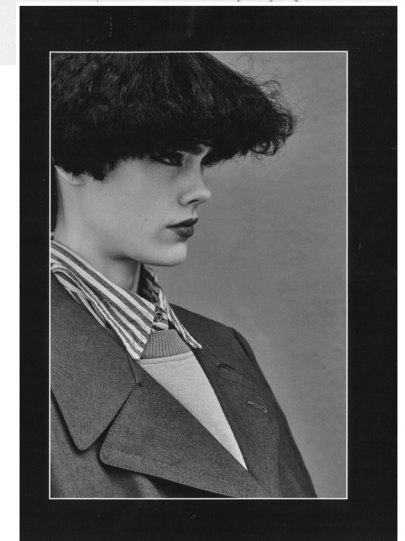
In the square cut exploration samples, possible techniques were found for suppressing the volume. Techniques generated from working intuitively in responsive making during the construction. An inverted box pleat combination in 4:10, and random deep pleats folded from either direction on the sleeve of 4:9.

Box pleats in varied forms. Found in Victorian shirts and reiterated in shapes found in the Pit Brow women's workwear.



## Strand 2: Square cut for upper body.

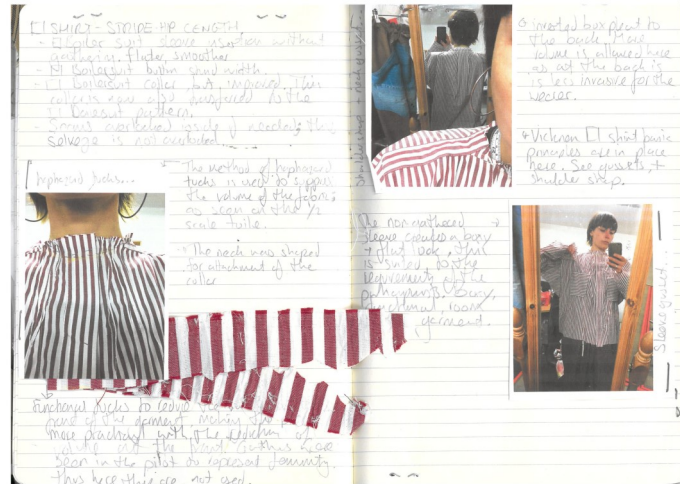
Initial ideas development. The imagery demonstrates a trapezium shape, found widely in the Pit Brow imagery, the participants sketches, and shirt imagery from magazines. This shape is seen the stripe square shirt. It is important as a shape seen in many of the participants garments, as it skims over the hips.



The image above from love magazine describes the mood for these upper body developments. I see the work as tidy and inspired by shirts and men's formal wear, but with a sense of edginess, something different.

## Strand 2: Square cut for upper body: Developing the stripe square shirt.

As with all garments in this study. The stripe square shirt was developed intuitively as I made it. I knew what the basic shape would be, but details such as collars, cuffs, fabric suppression, were addressed in response to the current state of the piece as I worked. I wanted to work in this way to have the freedom to change things as needed. Over-sewing was applied to the pocket, and a box pleat suppressed fabric at the back and was neat and smart. The hanging loop adds functionality.



When gathered and tucked, the neck was too high, and was cut down and shaped to the yellow chalk line as shown in the large image. The sketchbook images shows the removed piece.



Working out the pocket placement. Horizontal stripes, against vertical drew attention to the breasts, as did two pockets.



Observing the shape of the shirt body and sleeves when worn, and working out what to do with the collar and cuffs. I liked the wide sleeve, but I felt it was too wide to be practical, so I added a cuff.



## Adjustable and adaptable.

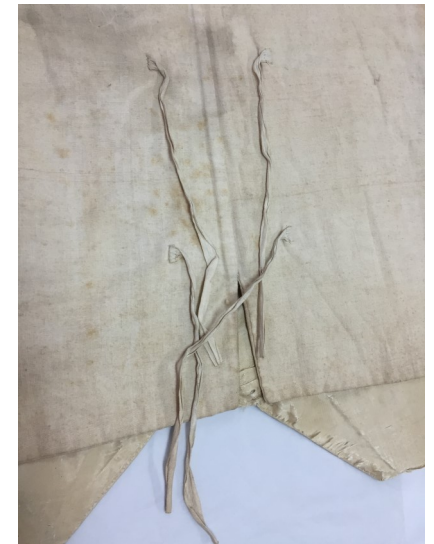
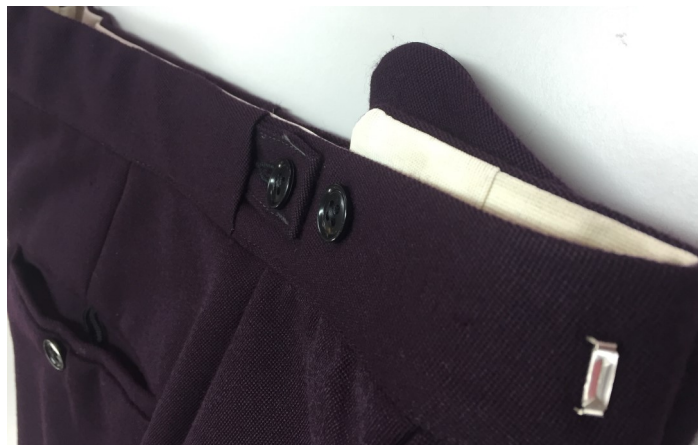
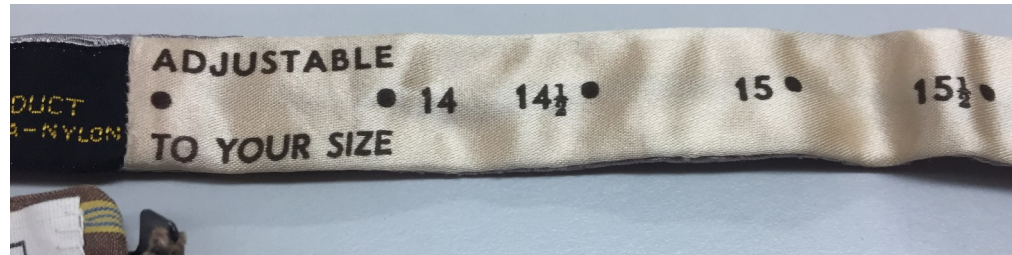
### Archival fieldwork at the Museum of London, the V&A and vintage items.

Items on this page are from the MOL, unless otherwise stated.

I am interested in the use of adjustment methods, they will enable me to fit clothing to a range of body sizes and shapes, and also allow the women to wear clothing to a tighter or looser fit as they choose. The method of *drawing in* the cloth seems to be most common. The bow tie is the exception with cloth sliding over itself.



Vintage trousers (my own)



Trousers from the V&A archive.

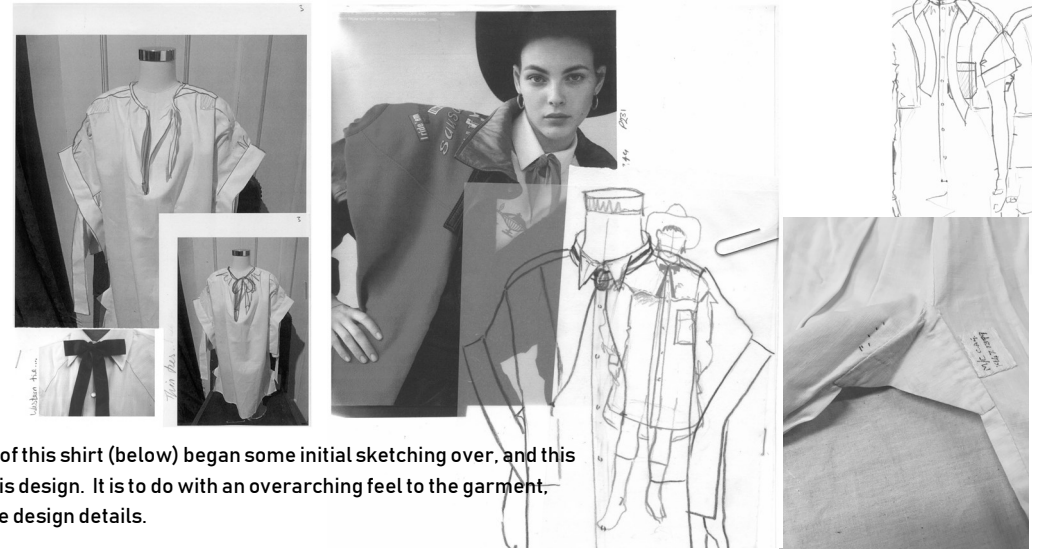
## Strand 2. The Stripe Dress Shirt. Developing the design.

I was inspired by the length and coverage of a full scale Victorian square shirt I had made and tried on. The shape and space around the upper body has been improved throughout this design process by deepening the armhole and removing gathering. The dress shirt is taking in these ideas. The Pit Brow imagery is important here for making links to workwear, which I have tried to encompass in

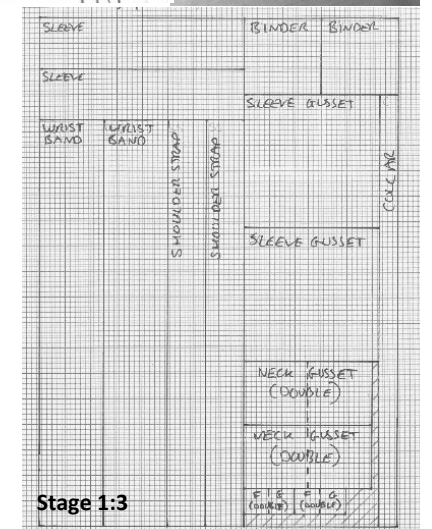


Initial designs inspired by the proportional exploration work and workwear from the Pit Brow images.

Inspiration for straps taken from square cut exploration sample 1:3. Incorporating function with engaging design detail by attaching long straps that can adjust the garment.



The neck and shape of this shirt (below) began some initial sketching over, and this initiated ideas for this design. It is to do with an overarching feel to the garment, rather than using the design details.



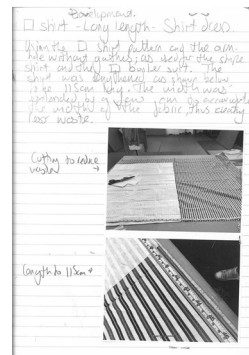


## Strand 2. Square cut for upper body. Square dress shirt. Responsive making.

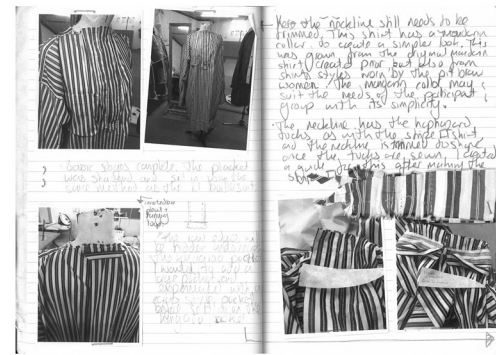
Documentation of the process was thorough in my sketchbook for this garment. There were a number of details to work out and I needed to sketch and work through ideas on paper whilst I was developing the piece. Inspiration for the adjustment solution came from the use of hardware at the Museum of London, which seemed purposeful in it's attention to small details. I found the garment below in We Are Cow in Manchester. It draws in at the side. I liked this idea for nipping in the waist if required. I have adapted the idea to include long straps and to offer more options or *levels* of adjustment.



Side waist adjustment detail at We Are Cow



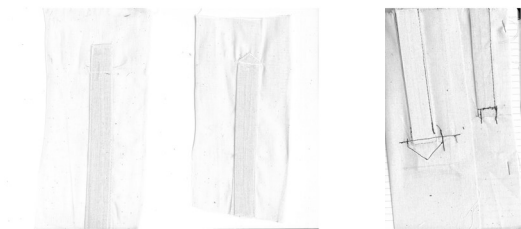
Cutting for minimal waste.



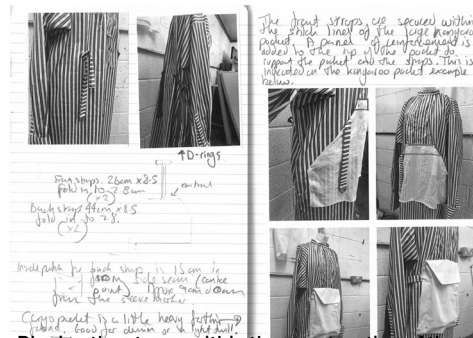
Working through the upper body design; neckline shaping, supressing volume at the back, front opening and pocket placement.



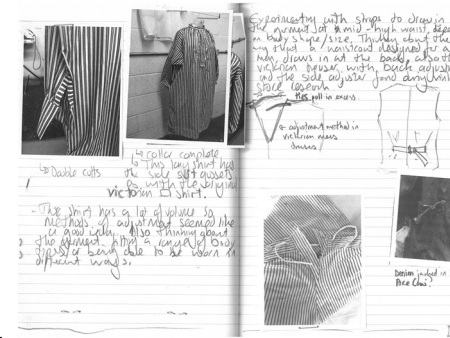
Reinforcement ideas for the top of the large front pocket, come rom the proportional explorations shirt. Comparing pocket styles. The open pocket (top) suited the fabric and the application better; hands in pockets is essential.



Testing plackets for the cuff, thinking about the use of over-sewing here; also contrast stich or matching. I went for matching in this case, I wasn't keen on the black in the detailed technique. Testing button hole sizes for the double cuff fastening.



Placing the straps within the construction of the pocket. Loose straps can sit inside the pocket out of the way. The open pocket rather than the cargo style worked better this way.



Considering the adjustment solutions.



Future developments, for use of the unused cargo pocket idea.

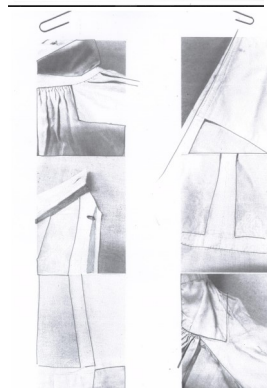
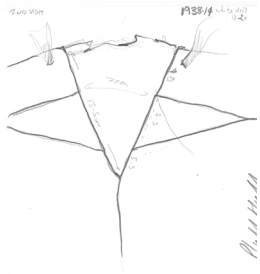
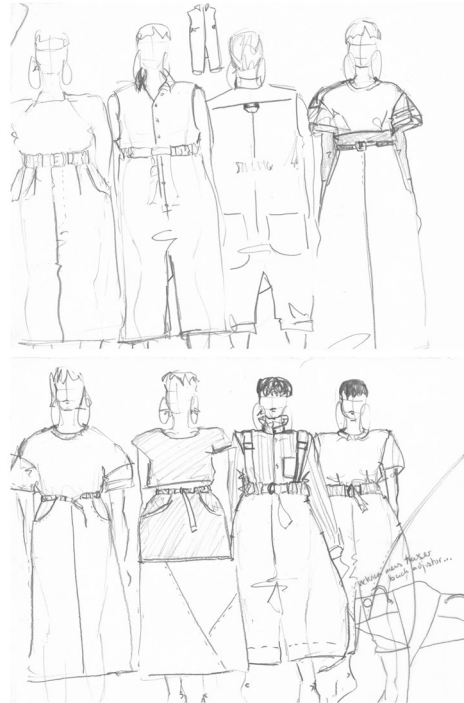
Stripe Square Shirt and Square Dress Shirt.





### Strand 3: Square cut for lower body.

Design ideas based on shapes found in archival imagery. Thinking about loose for the participants, and workwear. Workwear is functional and practical, is boxy and somewhat masculine. It shows construction in the stitching, and is unapologetic in being just useful and hardy. The V shape became incorporated into a gusset, and fabric changes would highlight this essential construction. I considered the skirt for this strand, and how to make it more practical. See next pages. The hitched skirt of the Pit Brow women is reinterpreted as pocket for the hitch trouser.



### Strand 3. Square cut for the lower body.

### Preliminary making. Working through the skirt to a trouser.

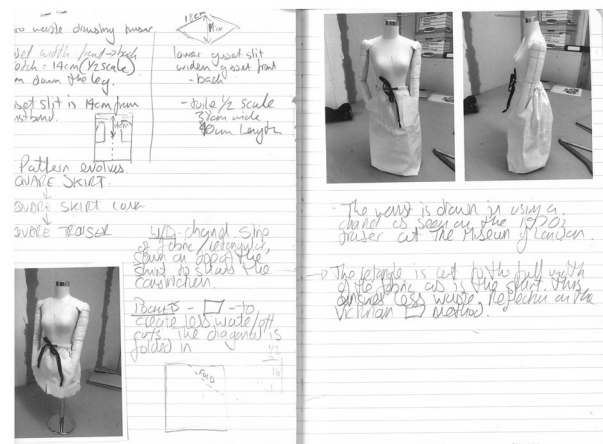
The skirt is cut as a rectangle. Then is drawn into the body at the waist. Drawing in makes the skirt adjustable at the waist. It is adaptable because fullness and gathers created by drawing in can be moved around the body. The gathers are seen to offer space in the garment.

**Square skirt A.** Rectangular front patch pockets reflect the boxy shape of the skirt and are large size and functional. Black webbing threaded through a channel, is used to draw the waist in.

**Square trouser A.** Working directly onto the skirt toile, the calico is slit from the hem to the crotch depth of 14cm from the waistband at half scale, a diamond shaped gusset inserted and legs sewn up. The gusset adds depth and space.

**Square skirt B.** Waistband channel is deeper to accept a wide webbing strap; the soft cotton webbing is 4cm, the equivalent of 8cm at full scale. A lighter calico on the patch pockets is translucent and shows the construction by highlighting shapes.

**Square trouser B.** The crotch is cut deeper, adding space.



First skirt

Skirt divided  
at the legs,  
and a gusset  
added to add

Second skirt.  
Deeper  
waistband.

Second trouser cut with a deeper crotch, wider gusset.

### Strand 3: Square cut for lower body.

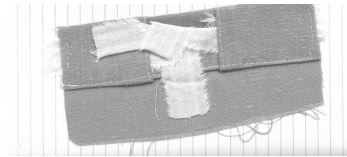
#### Hitch square trouser development.

Using the square cut process on the lower body was done by taking the simplicity and shape and applying that to the trouser. As for the square shirt, the trousers were developed using only rectangles, squares and the diamond gusset shape.

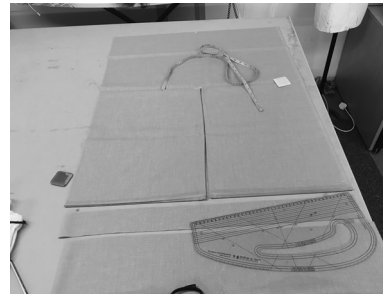
Square trouser B was made in full scale in blue wool fine suiting. The channel for the webbing was not scaled up, this was decided for comfort purposes, because the webbing would be 8cm, which may be restrictive.

A great deal of attention was paid to adjusting the pattern to fit to the fabric width, minimising waste. The sample garment proved that the pattern worked well in full size. There was plenty of room for movement and the trouser was comfortable. The shape created angular juxtapositions with the body. Especially the pockets that jutted out at front and back.

A large front pocket was added which aimed to mirror the look of the Pit Brow Women's hitch skirt. The pocket is gusseted for fullness and to make it sit off the trouser (next page). I pinned it to the sample trouser to check aesthetics, I was happy with it. I used repurposed denim taken from a pair of old jeans. The worn look seemed to fit with the ideas behind the piece.



Testing the idea for the webbing channel.



Cutting the blue fabric. The pattern is simple and angular. A gusset will add space to this flat shape in the crotch area, and add strength and movement where it is most needed.

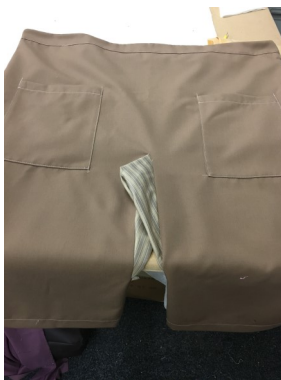




### Strand 3: Square cut for lower body.

#### Hitch square trouser.

I used a heavy tan wool fabric, which really stood off the body, it supported the weight of the pocket well and the fabrics contrast in their perceived value as quality wool and repurposed denim. The trousers have loads of space inside to move and provide physical space between the legs and the garment.





Strand 4: Square cut for full body.

Square boiler suit development.

The design of the boilersuit takes it's aesthetics from some of the initial designs drawn for the dress shirt. The legs are wide and so when worn the boilersuit takes on similar aesthetic.

The development of this work is well explained in the thesis, however here, stages are shown pictorially to demonstrate how the shirt and trouser patterns where joined.



The shirt is made very long to a first stage of making without finishes.



The shirt is slit to the crotch depth used for the square trouser. A gusset is added.



Working out pocket placement and the best place to start the front opening. Using the body as a guide.



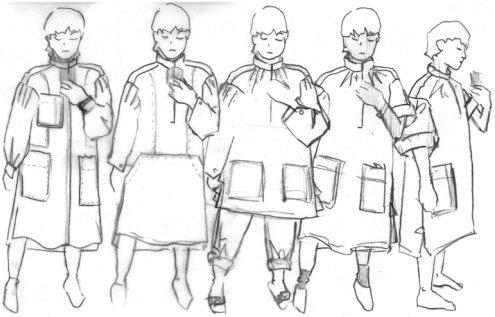
The opening is marked with chalk and cut in.



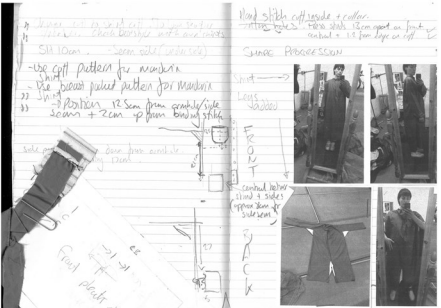
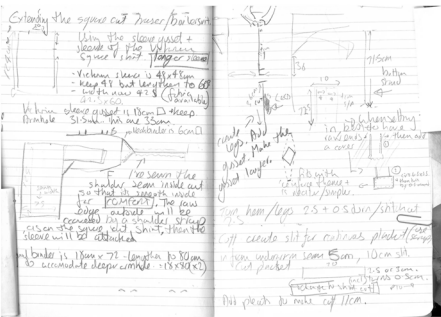
Pocket positions are marked with chalk, using the body as a guide.



Suppressing volume at the neck.



Dress shirt design ideas adding to the aesthetic of the boilersuit.



Working out dimensions for sections of the boilersuit and making adjustments to the design such as at the neck.

#### Strand 4. Square cut for the full body.

##### The complete sample.

I wanted to show the complete sample here because the fabric makes it look so different to the final garment on the next page. This fabric stands off the body, it has less drape. This more crumpled look is more casual than the final piece, and presents ideas for changing the use and entirely changing the look of this garment, by changing the fabric.



#### Strand 4: Square cut for full body.

##### Black square boiler suit.

This was made to the same pattern as the sample, albeit I have changed the press fasteners to a subtler type and haphazard tucks replace pleats around the front neck, and a box pleat sharpens up the back neck. The garment is smarter than the sample.









